

# GUITAR WORLD

**5 SONGS**  
WITH BASS LINES  
**METALLICA**  
"TRAPPED UNDER ICE"  
**CHILDREN OF BODOM**  
"BLOODDRUNK"  
**MICHAEL JACKSON**  
"BEAT IT"  
**KISS**  
"SHOUT IT OUT LOUD"  
**KANSAS**  
"CARRY ON  
WAYWARD SON"

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**SPECIAL  
COLLECTOR'S  
COVERS**  
1 OF 41

**GUNS  
'N'  
ROSES**  
A NEW  
GUITAR  
PHENOM!  
ON THAI  
HREDS CHINESE  
DEMOCRACY!

**+**  
RETURN OF  
THE LEGENDARY  
**TRITON**  
**BLACKMORE**

**TWO YEARS IN THE  
MAKING...  
80 PICKUPS  
LATER...**

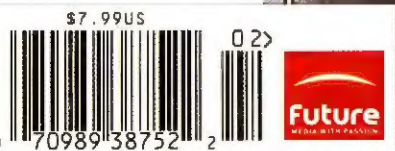
# VAN HALEN

**THE NEXT  
REVOLUTION**

"THIS IS THE  
CULMINATION OF  
MY 35 YEARS  
WITH GUITARS!"

**SUPER  
LESSONS!**  
TESTAMENT'S

**ALEX SKOLNICK**  
& CHILDREN OF BODOM'S  
**ALEXI LAIHO**





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## 64 EDDIE VAN HALEN

COVER PHOTOGRAPH:  
CLAY PATRICK MCBRIDE

GROOMING BY:  
JUDY LEWIN

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# THE WOODSHED

FEBRUARY 2009

## THE STRINGED QUARTET

**I**T SEEMS LIKE a new, glitzy signature model guitar comes out almost every other Monday. So why should we care if Eddie Van Halen has sacrificed his good name for yet another one, let alone one that looks suspiciously like the last one he designed?

Well, actually there are many good reasons. Anyone with even a passing familiarity with the electric guitar knows that Ed is no mere player. Since he rocketed to fame in the late Seventies, Eddie Van Halen has been recognized for both his innovative guitar playing and his innovative guitar making. So when Eddie announces the launch of a new guitar, you can bet there will be something different and exciting under the hood.

"The only thing that's the same with the new Wolfgang is the body shape, and even that's changed a little bit," Van Halen tells *Guitar World* contributing writer Chris Gill in this month's exclusive look into the creative process of a true guitar trendsetter. "Everything else is different: the way the neck

bolts on, the stainless-steel frets, tuning pegs, binding, pickups, tailpiece, pots and more."

To find out what that "more" is, read this month's in-depth look at the making of a modern classic—what Ed feels is a guitar that has craftsmanship on par with such timeless instruments as the Les Paul Standard. Also on hand to provide color, detail and insight are *Guitar World*'s Tech Ed columnist Matt Bruck and master guitar builder Chip Ellis, who both were integral to the creation of the new Wolfgang.

If you bought your *Guitar World* at your local newsstand, you probably noticed that this month's issue has been printed with four unique covers, each featuring the EVH Wolfgang in a different finish. It turns out that Ed couldn't decide which of his guitars to hold on the front of the

magazine, so we said, "Why not rock them all?"

To Van Halen super fans that absolutely must have all four special covers and can't find them, don't panic: we're offering a limited-edition package that will include all four covers and this month's CD-ROM—which

includes a video interview with Ed—presented in a collectible envelope. While many magazines would take this opportunity to gouge their readers, we're actually offering this package at a savings. For as long as they last, this special four-pack—worth \$40—will be available at the low cost of \$29.99! Go to [guitarworld.com/store](http://guitarworld.com/store) to order. We only have 2,000 of 'em, so do it fast!

—BRAD TOLINSKI  
Editor-in-Chief



### "Do cables really impact guitar tone?"

Cables can distort the sound of your guitar by pushing the mids up and turning the highs down. Elixir™ Cables feature a unique cable technology that fixes this problem by delivering the lowest capacitance and truest voice of your guitar.

Find Out More at [www.ElixirCables.com](http://www.ElixirCables.com)

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TOM ANDERSON - World Renowned Guitar Builder & Tone Guru



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# SOUNDING BOARD

SEND LETTERS TO: THE SOUNDING BOARD, GUITAR WORLD, 149 FIFTH AVENUE, 9TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10010, OR EMAIL US AT SOUNDINGBOARD@GUITARWORLD.COM.

## HOLIDAY CHEER

I just wanted to commend you on a fantastic Holiday 2008 issue. Tony Iommi, Alice Cooper, Lindsey Buckingham—in a word, awesome! As an older reader of your magazine, these guys were some of my reasons for picking up the guitar. The articles in the issue brought me back to a time when I was growing up in the Seventies, hanging with my buds on those warm summer nights, with the music of these guys flowing out of the speakers. All felt right with the world then. Thanks for the memories.

—Tom Schmidt

Thank God. That's what first ran through my mind when I opened my mailbox and saw "The Godfather" looking at me. It's about time someone really gave Tony Iommi—a real guitar god—credit. The fact that the Holiday issue also had Lamb of God, Jimmy Page and Alice Cooper made it even better.

—Joey Shaw

## FRIEND OF THE DEVIL

I've been a loyal subscriber for over 10 years and it only gets better. I wanted to thank you for including tabs of some awesome songs that I otherwise wouldn't have known about. I never gave any respect to country music until you guys put the Charlie Daniels Band's "The Devil Went Down to Georgia" in the mag, and now I include it in my everyday practice. My musical horizons are constantly widening.

—Matt

## FAMILY AFFAIR

My husband's subscription to *Guitar World* is one of two that we continually renew. Each month he gets turned on by some article, new technique or lesson, and I think it's great. I teased him at first, but have come to terms with my growing attraction to this magazine. I seem to enjoy something in every issue, and as you can see from this photo, our little girl clearly follows her father's lead. By the way, I blame that issue for sneaking James Hetfield into my dreams.

—Momma B.



## AND THE WINNERS ARE...

I was so stoked when I found out that I won the Mick Thomson giveaway on *GuitarWorld.com*! As you can tell in the picture, I'm left-handed, but I just switched around the strings and it plays great. Thank you, Mick Thomson and *Guitar World*!

—Kenneth Clark-Fernandez

I recently won the N-Tune equipped Fender American Stratocaster *Guitar World* Giveaway. What a beautiful guitar. I still can't believe I won the contest. Thank you, *Guitar World*, for the greatest giveaway!

—Dave Miller



band Alice Cooper was in the early Seventies. Most would be surprised to know that ZZ Top opened for Alice Cooper, not the other way around. It's such a shame that the band broke up and Alice went solo. I never felt like Alice's solo records reached the heights of the original band. Yet I understand, given the alcoholism and drug abuse of Glen Buxton, why it happened. Again, thank you, Jaan, for a great piece of work.

—Dave Weber

## ERROR MESSAGE

I normally wouldn't write to chastise someone else's work, but how many editorial processes did the opening pages of your Alice Cooper story go through? Either it was way too few or you guys need to pay a little

closer attention to what you print. If you haven't figured it out yet, you reported this was the 25th anniversary of an album that came out in 1973. I know there must be a lot of numbers flying around the office, with all those flatted fifths and minor thirds and the augmented whatever's, but come on.

—Mark Lamperetta

*You write, Mark, we goofed!*



## COOPER UNION

Compliments to Jaan Uhelszki for a truly outstanding piece of journalism about the Alice Cooper Band in the Holiday 2008 issue. I've read a fair amount about this historic rock band, but I have to say, this article was the most insightful. It seems that most people under 45 years of age don't realize how big a

## DEFENDERS OF THE FAITH

GUITAR WORLD READERS IN THE SPOTLIGHT



### AUSTIN STAMBAUGH

AGE 13  
HOMETOWN LaGrange, OH  
GUITARS 2000 Epiphone Les Paul Standard, Epiphone SG Custom  
SONGS I'VE BEEN PLAYING "Take It Out on Me" by Bullet for My Valentine and "Perfect Crime" by Guns N' Roses  
GEAR I MOST WANT Gibson Les Paul Gold Top, Tonebone Hot British pedal



### AUSTYN GOLDRING

AGE 14  
HOMETOWN Mulvane, KS  
GUITARS Dean Razorback DB, Epiphone Les Paul Special II  
SONGS I'VE BEEN PLAYING "Entrance of the Flamingo" by Trivium and "Walk" by Pantera  
GEAR I MOST WANT Boss MT-2 Metal Zone



### AUSTIN BRUCKNER

AGE 14  
HOMETOWN Scribner, NE  
GUITARS Ibanez RG, Fender Acoustic  
SONGS I'VE BEEN PLAYING "Remember" by Disturbed and "Duality" by Slipknot  
GEAR I MOST WANT Orange Rockerverb 100 head and full stack, ESP LTD ALEXI-600 Alexi Laiho

Are you a Defender of the Faith? Send a photo, along with your answers to the questions above, to [defendersofthefaitth@guitarworld.com](mailto:defendersofthefaitth@guitarworld.com). And pray!



# TUNE-UPS

INSIDE GUITARWORLD.COM 32 BETCHA CAN'T PLAY THIS! 32 DEAR GUITAR HERO 38 SETLIST 42 & MUCH MORE!!!

## ACT OF FAITH

ANTHRAX STAY FOCUSED ON NEXT ALBUM DESPITE MAJOR PERSONNEL CHANGE. [By JON WIEDERHORN Photos by GENE AMBO]



### IT WASN'T THE EUPHORIC

success of their *Among the Living* reunion tour in 2005 and 2006 that inspired Anthrax to create some of their thrashiest material in 20 years. Rather, it was the frustration and uncertainty that came after that nostalgic run.

Following the tour, as they began preparing new songs, Anthrax reached an impasse over financial terms with returning vocalist Joey Belladonna, whose original tenure in the band ran from 1985 to 1992. When they were unable to convince former singer John Bush (1992 to 2004) to return to the fold, Anthrax began the search for a new frontman as they continued to work on material for a new record, to be titled *Worship Music*.

"We were in a bad place, and there is a lot of anxiety and aggression within these songs because of that," explains drummer and primary songwriter Charlie Benante. "The music is a testament to everything we've been through and overcome."

Anthrax wrote about half the 13 songs for *Worship Music* before lead guitarist Rob Caggiano introduced them to their new (fourth) singer, Dan Nelson, who has the vocal range of Belladonna and the ragged rasp of Bush. "He's incred-

ible," says rhythm guitarist Scott Ian. "The second he opened his mouth to sing, I knew he was gonna be the dude."

The band began tracking drums in Chicago in early November, then recorded the guitars over two weeks in Los Angeles and the bass and vocals during a session in New York.

"It's by far the riffiest record we've done since *Among the Living*," Ian says. "There's so much fast down picking and a ton of right-hand stuff. We've spent two years writing these songs and making them the best they could be."

*Worship Music* is scheduled for release in May on Megaforce Records. □



Scott Ian; (inset) Dan Nelson



RIGHT NOW ON

## GUITARWORLD.COM!

## JIMI HENDRIX GIVEAWAY!

Win a Jimi Hendrix *Electric Ladyland* 40th Anniversary Prize Package! One grand-prize winner will receive a custom Jimi Hendrix package including the deluxe *Electric Ladyland Collector's Edition* CD+DVD, the brand-new *Live at Woodstock* and *Live at Monterey* Blu-ray releases,



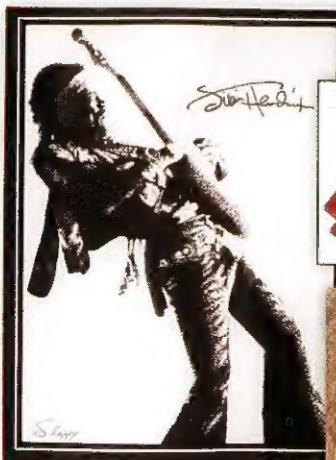
the classic Jimi Hendrix Experience four-CD box set and a collection of Dunlop Jimi Hendrix pedals. Go to the Contests section of GuitarWorld.com now to enter.

## HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

Looking for that perfect gift for a fellow guitarist this holiday season? Or maybe something for yourself because no one you know will buy you anything cool? Regardless of your situation, head over to GuitarWorld.com to see our Holiday Gift Guide, packed with some of the newest and most-rockin' guitars, toys, accessories, box sets and more.

## READER ART CONTEST—DEADLINE EXTENDED!

Due to overwhelming response from all your aspiring "guitarists," the Reader Art Contest—sponsored by our friends at Seymour Duncan—has been extended to December 31! To enter, simply submit your artwork of a famous guitarist to [soundingboard@guitarworld.com](mailto:soundingboard@guitarworld.com). The winner will be featured in an upcoming issue of *Guitar World*. All submissions can now be viewed in a special gallery at [GuitarWorld.com](http://GuitarWorld.com).



Seymour Duncan



## ON NEWSSTANDS NOW!

## GUITAR LEGENDS:

## METALLICA

The ultimate Metallica collection is available now! *Guitar Legends* celebrates 25 years of Metallica mayhem with an incredible anthology of interviews, lessons, rare photos and more. The issue also features full guitar and bass tabs for the Metallica classics "Fade to Black," "Nothing Else Matters," "Enter Sandman," "Master of Puppets" and "Seek & Destroy."



## GUITAR DVD:

HOW TO PLAY THE BEST OF THE JIMI HENDRIX EXPERIENCE'S *ELECTRIC LADYLAND*

The latest in our *Guitar DVD* instructional-disc series features more than three hours of lessons on how to play the best songs from the landmark Jimi Hendrix album *Electric Ladyland*. Andy Aledort teaches you everything you need to know to accurately play songs like "Crosstown Traffic," "Voodoo Child (Slight Return)" and Hendrix's classic take on Bob Dylan's "All Along the Watchtower."

BETCHA CAN'T PLAY THIS!  
ANDY TIMMONS

To hear more of Andy's playing, visit [ANDYTIMMONS.COM](http://ANDYTIMMONS.COM)!



"HERE'S A COOL, SUSPENSEFUL-sounding climbing run that's based on the A minor pentatonic scale [A C D E G] and the A Dorian mode [A B C D E F# G]. The concept is to ascend the neck on just two strings—in this case the G and D—using a uniform alternate picking pattern applied to shifting positions.

"What I'm essentially doing here is stringing together groups of 16th notes played in four-note shapes, or modules, and playing mostly two notes per string, with a couple of exceptions here and there wherein I stay on the G string and repeat the first two notes instead of crossing over to the D string.

"Notice how the contour of the line climbs and falls—kind of like a statistics graph chart—as I ascend a couple of positions, take a step back and then continue ascending. I find this kind of 'up two, back one' or 'up three, back one' contour more interesting and dramatic than just a straight ascent. It also enables you to prolong a lick by not running out of fretboard as quickly.

Freely (♩ = 208)

P.M.



"One valuable thing about this approach, which I've worked on a lot, is that it helps you to learn scales up and down the neck, or horizontally, as opposed to just learning them vertically in separate positions. This way of playing and thinking can help you connect 'blind spots' and also enables you to maintain a consistent timbre by staying on the same strings throughout a run.

"As is almost always the case when you're playing any kind of fast lick like this, it's important to try to use both hands to mute the strings you're not playing on to suppress any sympathetic vibrations, which create noise that distortion unfortunately amplifies. The bass strings are best muted by lightly resting the palm of the picking hand

on the bridge saddles as you pick the higher strings, while the treble strings may be muted with the fleshy side of the fret-hand fingers.

"Equally important is that you resolve a lick smoothly. Notice here how I conclude the run with a bend and a hearty finger vibrato, which serves as the icing on the cake."



# MARK TREMONTI

THE FULL TREMONTI [By JOE BOSSO]

**W**HEN ALTER BRIDGE and former Creed guitarist Mark Tremonti decided to create his own instructional DVD, *The Sound and the Story* (FRET 12/Core Twelve Productions), he wanted to "make the total lesson plan I wished I could have had when I was learning the ropes."

Tremonti describes himself as a "self-taught" guitarist, but one of his tricks was to rent instructional tapes (this was pre-DVD) for a day and try to soak up "as many scales and patterns as I could. But that was what I found so frustrating: the tapes would give me exercises, but I never felt like I was getting inside the soul of the guitarist and why his playing was so special. That's something I aimed to change with my DVD."

To accomplish this, Tremonti went for the gusto: *The Sound and the Story* features not only 40-plus exercises, three hours of concert footage, alternate camera angles and a tablature book but

also includes comprehensive breakdowns of the solos on Alter Bridge's *Blackbird* album. "I go into why I played each solo the way I did, and I take you through every step," he says.

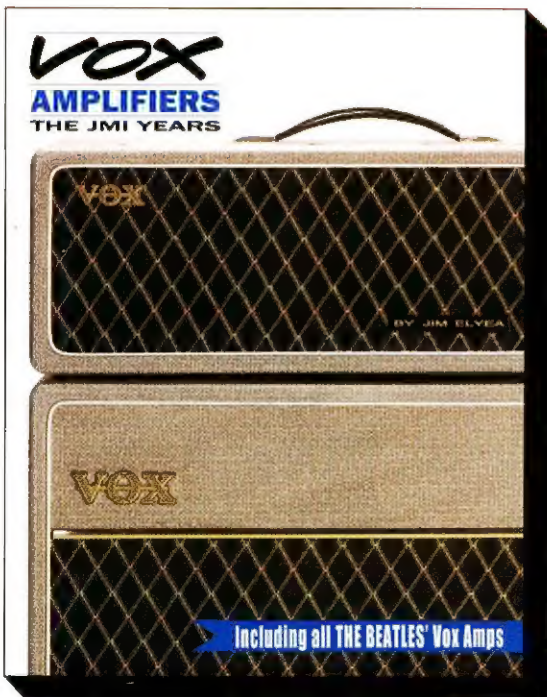
Ever the team player, Tremonti also invited some of his friends and favorite players to provide guest lessons, such as Michael Angelo Batio, Troy Stetina, Rusty Cooley, Bill Peck and fellow Alter Bridge member Myles Kennedy. "I learned something from every one of these guys," Tremonti says. "They complete the overall endeavor extremely well."

So what did Tremonti find to be the hardest aspect of making his first instructional DVD? "Not making any mistakes," he says, laughing. "When you cut a record, you can bonk a note and it might actually work. But when you're shooting something like this, every second has to be spot-on. Needless to say, we did a lot of takes!" □



# 20TH CENTURY VOX

JIM ELYEA'S NEW BOOK DELIVERS THE DEFINITIVE HISTORY ON THE VOX AMPS THAT DEFINED THE SOUND OF CLASSIC ROCK AND ROLL. [By ALAN DI PERNA]



**S**EVERAL BOOKS HAVE BEEN written about Vox amps, but none come close to Jim Elyea's monumental new tome, *Vox Amplifiers: The JMI Years* (The History For Hire Press). Meticulously researched and lovingly written, it weighs in at a hefty 682 pages, all of which are devoted to the golden decade between 1957 and '67, when Vox was under its original ownership, Jennings Musical Instruments. In those pre-Marshall days, Vox was the undisputed king of rock, the amp of choice for the Beatles, Stones, Who, Kinks, Clapton, Beck and Page and a whole hoard of other British Invaders. It's no exaggeration to say that rock and roll music wouldn't have sounded the same without Vox.

And Elyea explains why in abundant detail. He tells the Vox/JMI story from several angles, weaving in vital cultural contexts, company history and the most exhaustive study anywhere of every single tube,

diode, resistor, knob, speaker cone, grille cloth and other material that went into the making of Vox amps during this period. Most rock guitarists know about AC30s and Super Beatles, but Elyea's comprehensive treatment of obscure and arcane models—from the retro sci-fi Transonic 60 to the Gyrotone rotating speaker cab—will send gearheads scurrying to Craig's List. Elyea even offers detailed harmonic analyses of the 45 most coveted JMI Voxes, also explaining which of these amps was used on which legendary recordings by the artists mentioned above, not to mention post-Sixties icons like Brian May, Tom Petty and the Edge.

For Vox owners, wannabe Vox owners, collectors, Sixties rock fans and connoisseurs of vintage guitar gear, Elyea's *Vox Amplifiers* is an essential bookshelf item. But be forewarned: you'll probably have to reinforce your shelving. This is one heavy volume, in every way. For more information, visit [voxguidebook.com](http://voxguidebook.com) □



# CATTLE DECAPITATION

GOOD HEAD [By JON WIEDERHORN Photo by ZACH CORDNER]

**W**ITH ALL THE NEW, young technical bands burning up MySpace and monopolizing the extreme metal market, San Diego veterans Cattle Decapitation knew they had to up their game for their sixth album, *The Harvest Floor* (Metal Blade). So without discarding the pulverizing speeds at which they've always played, the vegetarian death metallists diversified their attack big-time.

"The riffing is a lot more spider-webby and intricate," explains lone guitarist Josh Elmore. "There are more crazy, off-the-wall parts, and chromaticism and noise. But at the same time, there are also more solid rock riffs to balance out the insanity. We've done that in the past, but this time, instead of repeating a rock riff once, we did it a couple times or had it recur so it's important to the whole song."

In addition to beefing up their musicianship and songwriting, Cattle Decapitation strengthened their lineup. *The Harvest Floor* is the band's first disc to feature acrobatic drummer David McGraw (formerly of Sleep Terror), who replaced Michael Laughlin in 2007 and compliments Elmore's off-kilter licks with a wide range of creatively brutal beats. The band also expanded its instrumental boundaries, inviting cellist Jackie Perez Gratz (Grayceon, Amber Asylum) to add haunting passages to "Regret & the Grave" and experimental singer Jarboe (J2, ex-Swans) to contribute harrowing vocals to the title track.

"We're big Swans fans, so it was thrilling to have her involved," Elmore explains. "She did 11 tracks of vocals and said, 'You pick and choose what you want.' We were like, 'Wow, you totally rule.'"

Cattle Decapitation worked on *The Harvest Floor* with Billy Anderson (Melvins, Swans), who also produced the band's 2006 release, *Karma.Bloody.Karma*. This time, however, they took a more professional approach by spending a full month at Sharkbite Studios in Oakland to make the album sound as clean and contemporary as possible.

"In the past, we wanted the albums to sound like we do live, so we never tried to make them too polished," Elmore explains. "The funny thing is, when we actually said the heck with it and decided to make the production sound as modern as possible, then it ended up sounding more like we do live." □



Josh Elmore

**There are more crazy off-the-wall parts and noise."**

## AXOLOGY

### GUITARS

Custom axes by San Diego's Naked Guitars

### AMPS

Bogner Uberschall, Engl Fireball, Satellite Proton

### EFFECTS

Morley wah, Boss delay, DigiTech Whammy Pedal, MXR Blue Box

### STRINGS

D'Addario

## INTRODUCING



## SSS

**ALBUM** *The Dividing Line* (Earache)

**THE SOUND** New millennial crossover thrash

**HISTORY** Raucous U.K. crew SSS (Short Sharp Shock), follow-up their self-titled 2007 debut with this year's *The Dividing Line*. SSS come out swinging on tracks like "Thrash with a Small Moustache" and "Toxic Bee," which pummel with fast riffs, fierce breakdowns and snarling vocals, thanks to frontman Foxy.

**TALKBOX** "Too metal for the hardcore kids and too punk for the thrashers!" is how vocalist Foxy describes the new album's sound. "Open wide and get ready to choke down 20 raw crossover tracks."



## KRALLICE

**ALBUM** *Krallice* (Profound Lore)

**THE SOUND** Atmospheric black metal guitar virtuosity

**HISTORY** Built around the extreme guitar acrobatics of Mick Barr (Ocrilim, Orthelm) and Colin Marston (Behold...The Arctopus, Dysrhythmia), Krallice take the subgenre of atmospheric black metal to new, virtuosic heights. Seismic rhythms, punishing tempos and tasteful fretboard tapping and shredding fill this exciting debut.

**TALKBOX** "With Krallice I have been focusing on playing less rhythmically with my picking hand, trying instead to keep a constant tremolo picking motion and leaving the fretting hand free to do whatever it wants," Barr says. "But I also try not to think so much about what I'm doing and just let it flow out intuitively."



# SYNYSTER GATES & ZACKY VENGEANCE

## of AVENGED SEVENFOLD

THEY'VE GROWN FROM A MASTERFUL RECORDING ACT INTO A WORLD-CLASS PERFORMING ACT. BUT WHAT *GUITAR WORLD* READERS REALLY WANT TO KNOW IS...

**You just released a live DVD [Live in the LBC & Diamonds in the Rough]. What inspired you guys to do this now?**

—Colby Denning

**SYNYSTER GATES** It's taken a long time for us to cultivate and create a show we're proud of, and we thought we reached it on the Taste of Chaos tour. So we decided to film the show in our hometown of Long Beach.

**ZACKY VENGEANCE** We've gotten to the point where we've established ourselves as a very confident live band. We really aim to put on the best show possible, whether it's in front of a few kids or 100,000 kids. I think there are a lot of people that have seen the show and want to remember the experience. And then there are people who have never had the chance to see us live. So we wanted to put out the DVD for all those people. We're really pleased by how it turned out. It's a huge accomplishment for us.

\*\*\*\*\*

**You have an incredible live show, with pyro and the works. How much does that set you back a night, and why do you think it's worth it?**

—Bill Browning

**GATES** It sets us back quite a bit. [laughs] Those things are tens of thousands of dollars, and sometimes hundreds of thousands of dollars. But we do it for our fans and for the pride of giving them the best show possible. Yeah, it's a sacrifice, but it's what we set out to do. We put our hearts into everything, not just the music and the records. We do it with the live shows, music videos and everything. We give our all...including money!

**VENGEANCE** When people spend \$30 or \$40 on a ticket, they deserve to see something better than normal. They deserve a real cool show. We want to make sure the kids are having a good time.

\*\*\*\*\*

**You guys have toured the world and played shows with some legends. What's the most memorable thing you've experienced on the road?**

—Jeff Todd

**GATES** Going onstage with Metallica and singing a couple cover tunes with them was a great honor.

**VENGEANCE** It was definitely playing with Metallica in Berlin, Germany, in front of 80,000 people. I don't get too

Performing on Taste of Chaos, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, March 2, 2008

**I made it through the whole set, drenched in sweat and blood."**  
—Zacky Vengeance

nervous in front of a crowd, but when you're onstage with Metallica in front of that many people, it's hard enough to remember your own name let alone song lyrics. [laughs] We fumbled words and mumbled along, but we had a great time. It was a magical moment.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Like the rest of us, I'm sure as a young guitar player you had dreams of what being a rock star would be like. What is the most unexpected thing about your lifestyle? Did the dreams live up to the reality?**

—Terrell Owsley

**GATES** It's actually very normal. I was never that obsessed with fame. The money's great. That's kind of what I expected, and it's a really cool thing. I expected to be hassled more, but I kind of just keep to myself. I live right next door to my family members. I have a fiancé, and a little dog that is pretty much our child. Life is pretty normal. Maybe I get a little too drunk sometimes on the road, but that's it.

**VENGEANCE** I think when you're young and you want to do this for a living, you never really think about all

the behind-the-scenes work that goes into it. You just think about playing onstage in front of thousands of people and making lots of money. But I've learned there's a ton of hard work that goes into it. Because, basically, it's still five human beings that have a vision, and it takes a lot of work to realize that vision. If we want something done, we still have to do it ourselves. We still design our merch and our live shows so that they turn out the way we want them to. But it's been fun, and I've learned a lot. I have travelled all across the world, and I've met so many cool people. It's so much more than I could have expected.

\*\*\*\*\*

**What's the worst onstage injury you've ever sustained?**

—Phil "Grimlord" Perry

**GATES** I don't have a "worst" injury, but I can tell you my most embarrassing onstage moment. We were in Montreal playing with System of a Down in front of 20,000 kids. I was up there doing a solo and it was raining, which made everything slippery. I stepped onto one of the metal steps



at the front of the stage and slipped right off. It was very embarrassing. I had to watch that one a couple times on YouTube.

**VENGEANCE** My most debilitating injury would have been on Warped Tour about four years ago. We were playing in Indiana, and it was like 110 degrees. At about the third song in our set our singer, M. Shadows, was swinging his mic and it hit me perfectly on the top of my head. It cut my head right open and the next thing I knew blood was pouring down my face. It was mixing with sweat and going into my eyes and mouth. Because of the heat and the amount of blood I was losing, I started to feel like I was about to pass out. I found this video on YouTube, too. You can see where I start to play the notes all wrong and I'm about to pass out. But I will say that I made it through the whole set, drenched in sweat and blood.

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**What's your live setup as far as guitars, amps and effects?**

**GATES** We just got an endorsement from Marshall, so that's what I'm playing now. Before it was all about Bogner. But once we got our hands on the Marshall JCM800s, we realized just how freaking awesome they were. I play Schecters, and I put a Boss CS-2 [Compressor Sustainer] in my chain, and that's it.

**VENGEANCE** I'm a huge fan of Bogner Uberschall heads and basic Bogner cabs, but I've also recently fallen in love with the Marshall JCM800s. My guitar is the Schecter Zacky Vengeance signature, with Seymour Duncan JB's in both positions. It's the same as the production version.

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**You guys not only play some great music but you look good doing it. How important is personal style to Avenged Sevenfold?**

—Molly Simmons

**GATES** [laughs] I haven't really thought about it, but I guess it's pretty important. My girlfriend designs all the stuff I wear. Her company is called Syn Gates Clothing. I know, it's a very creative name. [laughs] Avenged really bump it up when we go onstage, but we don't go walking around town looking like that.

**VENGEANCE** It's definitely something we take a lot of pride in. I've always been a huge fan of style, whether it's logos or backdrops or clothing. I actually have my own clothing company [Vengeance University]. And I really think that style is what separates certain bands from the rest of the pack. I've always looked to bands that have good style. No Doubt with Gwen Stefani were always cutting edge, and Rancid and Social Distortion were



**Life is pretty normal. Maybe I get a little too drunk sometimes on the road, but that's it."**  
—Synyster Gates

always looking so cool onstage. I think as long as it feels real, then it's cool. We're always trying to one-up each other onstage, whether it's me wearing bowties or [bassist] Johnny [Christ] having a Mohawk or coming out in golf knickers. It makes it fun for us.

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**Do you have any plans for your next full-length? Have you been writing at all for it?**

**VENGEANCE** Right now we're just focused on touring. But we've been home for a week here and there and I've been writing stuff, mostly whatever I've been inspired by on the road.

**GATES** We have a couple different ideas, but we're gonna wait until we have a complete idea before we start talking about it. But we don't mix touring and writing. We like to give 100 percent focus to whatever we're doing at the time, and right now that's been touring.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Syn, you can solo in bunch of hard rock and metal styles. Are there any exercises or approaches you'd recommend to a young player who's trying to become more versatile?**

—Elliot Sax



**GATES** If you have good picking technique, I think that can apply to everything. You should definitely know a lot of legato, which mostly pertains to metal and distorted playing. If you can do sweep, economy and alternate picking, then you can play acoustic guitar, clean guitar or whatever you pick up. Then it's just all about how you outline the chord changes. With metal you'll likely be staying in, and with jazz you'll be out, but the technique will apply to both.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Zacky, you and Syn write some awesome harmonies. What's your approach to how you divvy up the parts?**

**VENGEANCE** Syn will come up with something or I'll come up with something, but when we hit rehearsal and start playing them live, that's basically when we decide who will play what. We'll switch around leads and riffs a lot, depending on where our hands are on the fretboard. Syn's an amazing guitar player. He'll often come up with something amazing that just can't be played on 22 frets. And since his guitar has 25 frets he'll obviously be the one to play that part. □



# REQUIEM FOR A HEAVYWEIGHT

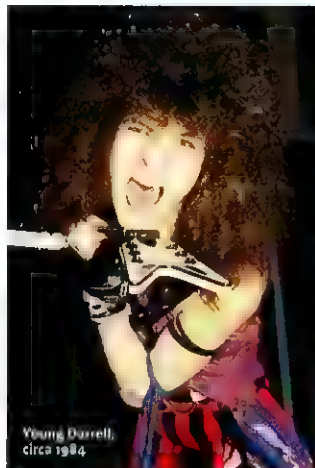
DIMEBAG DARRELL'S BROTHER VINNIE PAYS TRIBUTE TO HIS BROTHER IN A NEW BOOK.



Vinnie and Darrell jam in costume. Darrell holds his first guitar, a Hohner Les Paul copy, while channeling his hero, Ace Frehley, via a costume he and his mother made together.



Dime and Vinnie's jam session at the Fort Worth club Savvy's, in 1984. Dime and Vinnie had met Metallica the previous year and forged a friendship with the band.



Young Darrell, circa 1984



At the Bronco Bowl in 1985, Dime keeps up for his solo on the early Pantera tune "All Over Tonight."



The earliest incarnation of Pantera: (from left) bassist Tommy Bradford, singer Vinnie Paul, and guitarists Dimebag Darrell and Vinnie Paul.

**M**ANY KIND TRIBUTES have been spoken in memory of guitar legend Dimebag Darrell Abbott since his death on December 8, 2004. The last word, however, will go to his father, Jerry Abbott, and his brother, former Pantera and current Hellyeah drummer Vinnie Paul.

The family members have collaborated on a jam-packed new book entitled *Dimebag Darrell: He Came to Rock*, which contains more than 400 pictures of Dime along with a biography of his life written by authors Susan Doll and David Morrow. In addition to Dime's life story, the book includes a number of entertaining sidebars crammed

with little-known facts and heartfelt tributes from many of metal's most prominent musicians, including Slayer's Kerry King, Anthrax's Scott Ian and Zakk Wylde. *He Came to Rock* also comes with a DVD that features an expanded edition of the previously released *DimeVision Vol. 1: That's the Fun I Have*, supplemented with previously unseen footage.

The chapter devoted to the complete history of Dimebag's guitars will be of special interest to *Guitar World* readers. It tells the entire story of Dime's ax collection, from the Hohner Les Paul copy that the 11-year-old Dime used to learned Van Halen's "Runnin' with the Devil" to his posthumously released



Dean Razorback Series.

Also included is a nifty mention of Darrell's "Riffer Madness" column that ran off and on in these pages for a good part of the Nineties. "Despite a brutal schedule on the road, Darrell took his columns for *Guitar World* very seriously," the book reports. "He selected the topics several months in advance, then mulled each topic over with [*Guitar World* associate] editor Nick Bowcott... Each column was full of strong advice for the serious player as well as a smattering of Dimebonics"—Dime's unique slang—"for color and humor."

To order the book, and to learn the dates and locations of Vinnie Paul book signings, go to [bigvinrecords.com](http://bigvinrecords.com). □

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT TOP TO BOTTOM: THE ESTATE OF DARRELL ABBOTT; JERRY ABBOTT; DIMEBAG DARRELL; Vinnie Paul; THE ESTATE OF DIMEBAG DARRELL ABBOTT



OF ALKALINE TRIO

**[Interview by LEE BAINS Photos by JIMMY HUBBARD]**





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BY JOE BOSSO → PHOTOGRAPHS BY DANIELLE ST. LAURENT

# N



FILLER

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**DAVE KEUNING** TELLS  
HOW THE **KILLERS** SCORED A  
KNOCKOUT WITH THEIR LEAN  
AND MEAN NEW ALBUM,  
**DAY & AGE.**

**E**ARLY SUCCESS COULD HAVE ruined the Killers. When they exploded on the music scene in 2004 with *Hot Fuss*, an irresistible razzle-dazzle update of new wave and post-punk, they seemed already fully formed, and danceable songs such as “Mr. Brightside,” “Jenny Was a Friend of Mine” and “Somebody Told Me” made the Las Vegas quartet shiny new stars. “And then we almost blew it with *Sam’s*.”



Town," says guitarist Dave Keuning, referring to the band's 2006 Bruce Springsteen-esque follow-up that had many scratching their heads, sort of the way Keuning is doing now, seated in New York's Gramercy Park Hotel bar. He runs a hand through his generous, unruly mane of rock star hair and chuckles. "I'm joking, of course," he says. "We love *Sam's Town*, and we'll never apologize for it. We're not the kind of band that makes the same songs over and over again. If that's what you want, go listen to somebody else."

No apologies will be necessary once fans get a listen to *Day & Age* (Island), the Killers' new record. Its 10 songs capture the emotional anxiety of the times with a startling directness while they deliver plenty of rocking, stomping beats to fill dance floors and melodies to fill your head. Throughout the record, Keuning sprinkles liberal doses of sonic sweetening that reflect his love of guitarists such as the Edge and Johnny Marr.

Surprisingly, those aren't the guitarists he grew up on. As a teenager in Pella, Iowa, Keuning was spellbound by bands such as Deep Purple, Aerosmith and AC/DC. "To this day, Angus Young is my favorite guitarist," he says. "He plays the guitar to the max, you know? But it's funny: that's just not me. My fingers just don't move like that. Consequently, my mind doesn't think like that when I'm playing with the Killers. I probably think more like the Edge; I think of sounds and moods more than I think of figures and patterns. And it seems to work for the Killers, so, you know, why mess with it?"

**GUITAR WORLD** You're from Iowa. Not many bands come from there, except Slipknot. What made you decide on moving to Las Vegas to pursue your musical dreams? It's not the usual choice.

**DAVE KEUNING** I went to college in Iowa for a little bit and tried to get some bands together there. That was about a year of my life. The other guys moved away, and I dropped out of school. I worked for a while, and eventually I just said to myself, This can't be it. This can't be, you know, how it ends. [laughs] So I decided I had to get out.

I considered moving to New York or Los Angeles, but they're two of the hardest places to move to when you're just starting out in a band. I did some research and found that Vegas was, like, a third of the price. So I thought, Well, it's close to Los Angeles, and it's a pretty cool place. And I moved there. I found an apartment I could afford. It was pretty awful by most people's standards, but I liked it. It served my needs.

**GW** You put an ad in a local paper and found Brandon Flowers?

**KEUNING** Well, first I found a girlfriend



who I had a band with for a time. Moral to the story: don't get involved with girls in your bands. [laughs] But after that, I ran another ad, and Brandon answered, and that's when the Killers started falling into place.

**GW** Did you balk at following a new-wave, post-punk musical direction? As a guitarist, did you want to play in something heavier?

**KEUNING** No, not at all. I love heavy music, but you see, I had fallen in love with a radio station in Vegas that played nothing but Eighties music. That had a real profound impact on me. All the other stations were playing this... well, I hate to name names...

**GW** Oh, go ahead.

**KEUNING** You know, Creed and Limp Bizkit—these faux heavy bands and nu-metal-type things. I'm not trying to put them down, although I guess I am, but they weren't my cup of tea. I liked groups that weren't so...you know...

**GW** Simplistic?

**KEUNING** Yeah. Groups that didn't just plod along on one idea throughout a song. When I started listening to the Eighties station, I got really into bands like the Smiths and the Cure and New Order.

So when Brandon and I hooked up, we were right on the same page. And so was everybody in the band. We knew we could make the kind of music we loved but make it tough sounding.

**GW** Were you surprised at the reaction to your first album, *Hot Fuss*? It exploded in the way that most bands would dream of.

**KEUNING** Not to sound conceited, but...no. I knew we were good, that we had great songs. I just thought, If only we're given a chance, people will respond. And they did. I knew we were as good as any band on the radio, and here we are, on the radio!

**GW** Tell me about how you approached *Day & Age*. Did your writing or recording method differ from your other records?

**KEUNING** It was different. We worked more separately during the writing stages. After we had finished touring behind *Sam's Town*, we took a break and went home and started writing by ourselves. We all started making demos and emailed them to each other using Logic [recording software], which is a great system to use.

**GW** What made you go with Stuart Price [Madonna, Missy Elliot] as your producer? He doesn't seem like a "rock" kind of guy.

**KEUNING** Yeah, but he is, actually. He's very, very musical. We just clicked. He had passion and great ideas. We had dinner with him in London, and we could just tell it was gonna work out. We went back to his apartment and I started playing him the intro to "Human," and immediately he had an enthusiasm and ideas that seemed to fit.

**GW** There are a lot of ornamental touches that you do on the guitar throughout the record. Do you think people don't see what you do sometimes?

**KEUNING** You mean, because I'm not a shredder?

**GW** Exactly.

**KEUNING** Probably, but that's okay. I care about the songs, the band, the overall statement. [laughs] Although sometimes people think my guitar parts are keyboard parts. That does bother me sometimes.

**GW** The album is very emotional, and your playing reflects that. The solo on "Losing Touch" is very anthemic and soaring. What kind of guitar did you use on it?

**KEUNING** On "Losing Touch," I think I used a Gibson ES-335.

**GW** I was wondering if you used your Fender Starcaster. That's such a cool guitar.

**KEUNING** It is a cool guitar. I didn't use that on much of the new album. I wound up using the 335 a lot. It just seemed to sound right.

**GW** When recording, generally how many passes do you do on a solo?

**KEUNING** Five or six, but not much more. After two or three tries I find an idea of where I should be going. With solos, if you think about them too much, they become sterile, they lose the life and the spark they should have. I always think solos should sound like the player is just playing, not like he's performing this piece of music he's written out. \*





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# BUMBLE

IN  
THE  
WILD  
WORLD  
OF

AFTER MANY YEARS  
IN THE SOLO STUNT-  
GUITARIST WILDERNESS,

**RON**  
"BUMBLEFOOT"  
**THAL**  
IS WELCOMED INTO THE  
WILD, WILD WORLD OF  
**GUNS N'**  
**ROSES.**

By Richard Bienstock  
Photos by Sarah Sturges

ACK  
IN  
THE  
EARLIER  
PART  
OF  
THIS  
DECADE,

**B**ACK IN THE EARLIER part of this decade, Ron Thal found himself in the midst of a severe life crisis. The Brooklyn-born, Staten Island-raised guitarist, then in his mid thirties, had spent the majority of his years struggling to carve out an existence as a working musician. And he had—though just barely. His greatest success came with the slew of solo albums he released as Bumblefoot, the moniker he adopted after reading about the inflammatory bacterial infection, which affects the feet of birds and rodents, in one of his wife's veterinary-school textbooks. The albums married his skewed sense of humor and manic vocal style to music that encompassed everything from rock to metal, funk to punk, ska to pop and beyond, and were shot through with the kind of mind-boggling, incredibly advanced flash-guitar work practiced by guys with names like Vai, Malmsteen and Satriani.



**O**f course, unless your name is Vai, Malmsteen or Satriani, the solo rock guitar niche can be a hard road to travel, and Thal had hit a few bumps along the way. By the mid 2000s, says Thal, sitting in the Guitar World offices one afternoon this past October, "the music business had really kicked my ass hard. I went through a lot of bad managers, bad associates, all these people that just tried to fucking destroy me. It got to a point where I was like, 'If this is what life is, I don't want it.'"

In a short period of time, Thal found himself heavily addicted to mood-altering meds, 90 pounds overweight ("Bumblefat," he says of his condition) and battling a crippling case of writer's block. "At that point I knew things had to change," he says. "So I decided that it was about time I got my shit in order. I weaned myself off the meds, started exercising and finished my next album [2005's *Normal*]." He pauses. "And you know, I found that when you make a conscious decision within yourself to change a bunch of shit, your place in the world changes as well. Certain things move toward you and other things move away. New connections are made. And within a few months of making all these changes, I got a call from Guns N' Roses."

As of this writing, the now 39-year-old Thal appears poised to pull off a feat even greater than merely being asked to join Guns N' Roses—he will also be a full-fledged member of the band when *Chinese Democracy*, the most famous album to never be released, finally, actually, unbelievably hits the shelves this November 23 (exclusively at Best Buy).

More than a decade in the making, the album will be Guns N' Roses' first studio effort of new material since the release of *Use Your Illusion I* and *II* 17 years ago. The incredibly long and winding road leading to this point has been well documented, with sole original Gunner Axl Rose standing in the eye of the hurricane, a monomaniacal, musical Howard Hughes battling time, technology, lawyers and leaks in an effort to see his singular vision through to its amazing end. The list of cohorts who have fallen by the wayside over the years begins with everyone in the *Illusion*-era band other than keyboardist Dizzy Reed, and continues through a slew of producers, engineers, managers, label execs and other associates.

On the guitar front alone, several big-name players have been involved with the project since its inception, from stars like Dave Navarro and Brian May to ex-band members Paul Tobias and Buckethead (the

latter of whom Thal was ultimately called in to replace). As it stands today, in addition to Thal, the guitarists credited as official Gunners on *Chinese Democracy* are Robin Finke and Richard Fortus, who have been with Axl since the late Nineties and early 2000s, respectively. And yet, at press time, Finke is back on the road with Nine Inch Nails, and it is unknown whether he will return to Guns N' Roses. If Thal has any knowledge of his co-guitarist's current status, he isn't saying.

"As far as I can tell," Thal says, choosing his words carefully, "Robin's in the band until I hear otherwise. With a band like

Guns, everything has to come through Axl. Nothing can come from me."

That said, Thal currently has plenty to discuss, including his collection of bizarre guitars with names like Swiss Cheese and the Flying Foot (see sidebar), and his new solo album, *Abnormal* (Bald Freak), which he wrote and recorded at his own New York studio last year during downtime from Guns. The disc combines Thal's blistering guitar work and snotty vocals with some of his most creative arrangements to date, which include the Johnny Rotten-fronting-Queen technical punk of "Abnormal," the





With GN'R at Rock in Rio, in Lisbon, Portugal, on May 27, 2006



angular, computers-gone-haywire attack of "Conspiracy" and the Chet Atkins-style shred dementia of "Guitars Still Suck." The overall sound, he says, is as if he "took the intensity knob and turned it up a couple of notches."

There's also Thal's own history as a musician. In addition to learning to play Eddie Van Halen's "Eruption" backward at the age of 12 and becoming a Shrapnel-certified guitar hero in his twenties, he has developed a career as a songwriter, band member, producer, engineer, transcriber, guitar teacher and solo artist.

And then there's *Chinese Democracy*, which, as of this interview, Thal has still not heard in full. "I don't want a copy," he says, "because everything gets leaked. And when it does I don't want to be on the list of suspects. So when it comes out, I'm gonna go down to Best Buy and get one, just like everybody else."

As for how it is he wound up on the album, and in Guns N' Roses in general, Thal has a more spiritual explanation. "Every musician has their own personality and their own little quirk about them," he says. "I guess Axl was just feeling my quirk, you know?"

**GUITAR WORLD** Given the band's tumultuous legacy, what were your thoughts when you were first approached to join Guns N' Roses?

**RON THAL** I was actually pretty iffy on the whole thing. A big reason for that was because at the time I first started talking with the Guns organization, the whole Dimebag [murder] situation was still very fresh. And I was wondering, Will people blame me for the original band not getting back together? On top of everything else, do I have to worry about that? Also, I kind of liked where my life was at that point: I had gotten myself back on track; I was doing my solo thing, working in my own studio recording other bands, giving guitar lessons, licensing some of my music for TV, touring a little bit. I wasn't rich and famous, but everything was on my own terms, and I dug that. My life was mine—my fuckups were mine, my successes were mine, and there's something to be said for that. So I wasn't sure if I wanted to drop everything I had been working toward.

# FOOT FETISH

## RON THAL

### EXPOSES SOME OF HIS MOST UNUSUAL CUSTOM GUITARS.

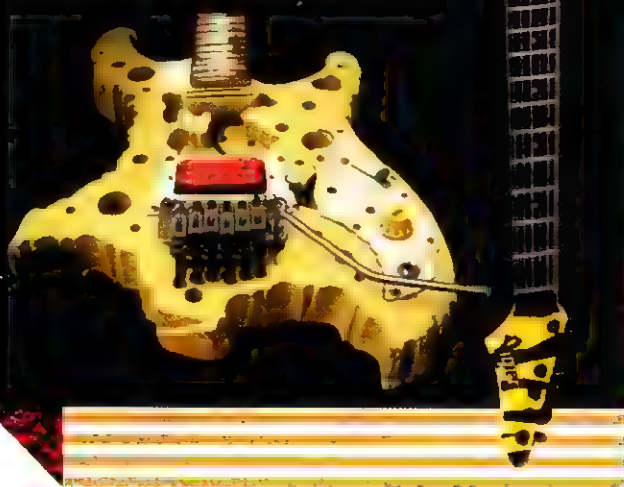
**R**ON THAL WAS ONCE a budding basement guitar luthier. Among his more outlandish creations were instruments with names like "Swiss Cheese," "The Double-Neck from Hell" and "The Hand," which featured a 37-fret neck and a body carved in the shape of Thal's left hand, with a glass-encased moth set into the wood. Beginning in the late Nineties, Thal hooked up with French guitar company Vigier, which, in addition to supplying him with some of their own inventive instruments, built a few oddballs specifically for him as well. Below, a sampling of Thal's Vigier collection.

#### VIGIER FLYING FOOT

The Flying Foot was the first guitar Vigier built for Thal, in 1998. It took five months to create, and, Thal says, "there's incredible detail on it, right down to the toenails." The instrument features two DiMarzio pickups and a push/pull volume knob that switches the humbucker to a single-coil. The *pièce de résistance*, however, is the tremolo system. "When you push down on the whammy bar," he explains, "it moves a long block on the back of the guitar, which triggers wings to pop out from both sides of the body. Very cool."

#### FLYING B.B.F.S.C.G. (Bumblefoot Swiss Cheese Guitar)

"This is based on my original Swiss Cheese guitar, which I built from an old 1983 Ibanez Roadstar," Thal says. "I like to vandalize shit,





**GW** What ultimately convinced you?

**THAL** Sometimes you just have to say, "What the fuck!" That's the truth. It's very easy to overthink yourself out of anything. You can come up with a million reasons to not do something, when the reality is that you should just shut the fuck up and do it. You make it work. It's like, these are your balls—juggle them. Of course, my balls are pretty lopsided right now. I have this little one over here that represents me, and then there's this big one over there that's Guns N' Roses, which is, like, 10 times the size of a normal ball.

**GW** You've been doing the music thing for a long time. And you've said that you played your first gig at the age of six.

**THAL** Well, that depends on what you consider to be a real gig. Is a real gig a gig you get paid for doing? Because then it may not have been six; it may have been 36! But yeah, my friends and I had a band called Viper 5, which was because there were five of us, of course. Although one of the band members, Tommy, probably wasn't that necessary—he played the paper cups. [laughs] But we did all originals and put on shows in my basement, charging kids 25 cents admission. And we had confetti for everyone to throw for the big finale. We were very into the whole *Kiss Alive!* thing.

**GW** By the time you were in your early teens you were not only gigging in bars but also giving guitar lessons. How did you progress to such an advanced level at so young an age?

**THAL** I was just really, really focused. And I practiced a lot. And I was the kind of kid who was into things like music theory. I found it to be really fascinating. I was interested in the math behind it all. It was like food for the brain; it wasn't just mindless stuff to me. But I needed to keep my brain occupied—otherwise I would do very bad things. And I did. I would vandalize the neighborhood in the most creative ways you could imagine.

**GW** Such as?

**THAL** Umm...making paint eggs, for example. I would buy a dozen eggs, pop little holes in the tops and bottoms of each one with a pin, and blow out all the insides. I'd cover the holes on the bottom with glue and, using a little eyedropper or something, fill the eggs with paint and seal them back up. Then I'd go out and throw 'em at people, houses, cars...anything that would break the shells. I think that was a sign that I needed to find a more positive outlet for my creativity.

**GW** You sound like you were a bit of an odd kid.

**THAL** Wasn't every musician? I think anyone who gets into any kind of artistic crap usually feels like they're not quite level with society in some way. That's the edge that pushes this stuff out.

**GW** One of your biggest guitar influences growing up was Eddie Van Halen. Is it true that you learned to play "Eruption" backward?

**THAL** I had to—it was a challenge. And yeah, this was the early Eighties, and there was nobody like Eddie. Before that I was into Kiss, AC/DC, the Beatles. But the first time I heard Van Halen, it was like nothing else. I had "Eruption" on cassette, so I popped out the reels, flipped them over and popped them back in. I literally wanted to be able to play the song forward and backward. And at 12 years old, I could do it.

**GW** A few years later you hooked up with Mike Varney, who at the time ran the preeminent label for shred guitarists, Shrapnel Records.

**THAL** I suppose that's when I went "legit." This was in the late Eighties. I had been gigging in bars and clubs around the New York area, trying to get a deal for my band, AWOL, and also playing in cover bands, doing, like, every Rush song known to man. But in addition to all that I started making these weird, strange instrumental songs, mostly for my own amusement. And a friend said to me, "Hey, you should submit this stuff to one of those guitar mags that showcases unknown players." So I did. And the guy who got in touch with me was Mike Varney. He put me in his "Spotlight" column [in *Guitar Player* magazine], gave me a nice write up, and we stayed in touch. I wound up appearing on a few of his compilation CDs and also a few of the *Guitar on the Edge* compilation records

so I took a chisel and started chipping the paint off of it. It went through a couple of alterations before I finally just grabbed a drill and a bunch of bits and started hacking out pieces of the body—I wanted the guitar to look like somebody had taken a bite out of it. The last thing I did was paint it yellow—I went to an auto plant store with a slice of Swiss cheese and told them I needed that color. That was my main guitar for many years in the Eighties and Nineties. In 2005, Vigier built me another one to almost the exact specs of the original. They made 10 of them, and I think they sold eight. I have one as well, and then there's another that I'd like to auction off for charity one day."

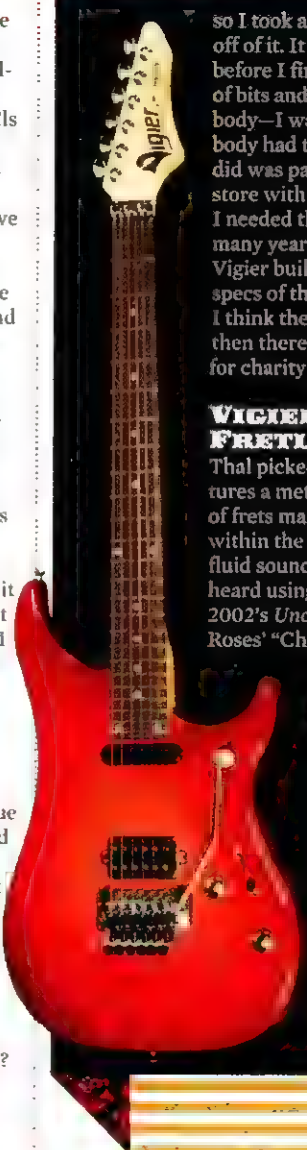
### VIGIER SURFRETER FRETLESS

Thal picked up this fretless guitar, which features a metal fingerboard, in 1999. The absence of frets makes it possible to sound microtones within the 12-tone scale, as well as simulate the fluid sound of playing with a slide. Thal can be heard using the Surfreter on solo albums like 2002's *Uncool*, as well as in the verses of Guns N' Roses' "Chinese Democracy."

### VIGIER BFOOT SIGNATURE SERIES

Thal's signature guitar features a DiMarzio Chopper single-coil pickup in the neck position and a DiMarzio Tone Zone humbucker in the bridge. And while the overall look and feel of the guitar is rather conventional given Thal's tastes, there is, he says, one idiosyncratic flourish: "There's a hole in the guitar's body, and inside is a small sewing thimble. It's easy to reach so you can quickly grab it and put it on, just like I do."

—Richard Bienstock



his brother [Mark Varney] put together. Mike was also talking to me about doing a full instrumental album, but I always said no, because I wanted to be part of a band. I grew up on Kiss, the Beatles, Van Halen—I wanted it to be four names up there. I didn't want to be known as the solo guitar guy.

**GW** But over the next decade that's what happened. You were recognized mostly for the Shrapnel association and also the solo CDs you released as Bumblefoot.

**THAL** But I never considered myself just a shredder. I'm more like a songwriter that tastelessly plays way too many notes for the song. [laughs] But that said, it's still the song first. And as a guitarist, the most amazing thing you can do is come up with one of those riffs that every player wants to learn: "Smoke on the Water," "Paranoid," "Stairway to Heaven" and, dare I even suggest, "Sweet Child O' Mine." If you can come up with something like that, you're golden. All the other bullshit doesn't matter.

**GW** Speaking of "Sweet Child," you were recommended for the

**"I'M ON AN ETERNAL QUEST TO GET THAT  
CLASSIC EDDIE VAN HALEN SOUND."**





# URBAN PRINTS

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guitar slot in Guns N' Roses by Joe Satriani. How did that come about?

**THAL** I got to know Joe after reading some interview he gave to a French magazine where he mentioned that he was a fan of my playing. I tracked him down and reached out to him, and we struck up a friendship. Then, in 2004, he invited me to jam with him at one of his gigs in New Jersey. It was him, Deep Purple and Thin Lizzy. I think we played [Freddie King's] "Going Down" together.

Anyway, a little later on he mentioned to me that he had dropped my name to someone in the Guns N' Roses camp because they were looking for a new guy to replace Buckethead. He wanted me to know that if anyone from Guns got in touch it wasn't a joke. And soon after that I heard from [Guns N' Roses keyboardist] Chris Pitman. He sent me a funny email, real obnoxious. I wrote back, and we started talking. Then I began talking with management and then with some of the engineers working on *Chinese Democracy*. So we're going back and forth,

everything's sounding good, and then there's this long stretch of nothing. Until one day it was, "Hey, we're rehearsing in New York. Wanna come down and jam?" So I went down and met the band, met Axl, and we hit it off. I came down again the next night, then the next week, and the week after that, and then before I know it [in May 2006] I'm onstage with the band at the Hammerstein Ballroom in New York.

**GW** Were those rehearsals your first contact with Axl?

**THAL** Yes. The thing I remember is that he walked in carrying a huge tray of hamburgers. At that point I hadn't eaten red meat in a long time, and I thought, What a perfect way to break that streak and have some beef. So I had a burger with him, and my God—that was the best freakin' burger I had ever tasted! Maybe it was because I hadn't had red meat in a while, but it was fucking good. But what I didn't know at the time, and I've since come to learn, is this: Wherever we are in the world, Axl knows where to find



**"WHEREVER WE ARE IN THE WORLD, AXI KNOWS WHERE TO FIND THE BEST BURGERS."**



Onstage with Rose as GN'R perform at the 10th Anniversary of the Gods of Metal Festival, Milan, Italy, on June 3, 2006.

the best burgers. We'll be in Japan and he'll find these little Kobe steak burgers that are just...wow. So I trust him when it comes to ground beef. Oh—and I also remember we were jamming to one of the new songs and he yelled in my ear that it reminded him of "Hey Bulldog." So I thought, All right, he's a Beatles guy. Cool.

**CW** What songs did you play at that first rehearsal?

**THAL** We did tons of stuff off *Appetite* [for Destruction], and maybe seven new songs.

**CW** Did you bone up on the Guns catalog before going in?

**THAL** Oh, yeah. I believe that you have an obligation to not waste someone's time. I made sure when I went in there I knew every guitar part, bass part and even vocal line. If I'm going to learn the song, I'm going to learn the whole song, not just my part. I want to be able to cover anybody's ass.

**CW** How familiar do you think Axl was with your work?

**THAL** He knew the stuff I had done on Shrapnel. He knew the song "I Can't Play the Blues" [from *Thal's* 1997 album, *Hermit*]

## Award Winners:

**Laiza Rabelo**

Most Improved Student

**Kanghyun Bu**

Outstanding Player

**Steve Decker**

Outstanding Student



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Front row (left to right):

Ed Finn, Ernesto Homeyer, GIT Most Improved Student: Laiza Rabelo, GIT Outstanding Player: Kanghyun Bu, Greg Harrison

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# "I'M LIKE A SONGWRITER THAT TASTELESSLY PLAYS WAY TOO MANY NOTES FOR THE SONG."

and I think he said that was one of the things that made him want to check me out. But I don't know if he really knew too much. I don't think anyone did, other than real guitar freaks.

**GW** You joined Guns N' Roses following Buckethead's departure. Were you basically called in to play his parts?

**THAL** Pretty much. I wasn't there when

Bucket was there, but it seemed like whatever he played, that's what I played.

**GW** My theory is that, in sound and style, your co-guitarists, Robin Finke and Richard Fortus, function as the modern day Slash/Izzy tandem. Then there's you and, previously, Buckethead, who fill the role of "X Factor." You're the go-to guys for any off-the-wall, "stunt" guitar bits.

**THAL** Yeah, I know what you mean. I can agree with that. But all I know is Axl has a vision, and I trust that vision. For a lot of things, especially earlier on, it was like, "All right, we'll take care of the pretty stuff. You just shred." But I think things have loosened up quite a bit. For instance, onstage I'll play the pretty stuff in between the verses on "Sweet Child O' Mine." Or the end solo of "November Rain." Or the second part of the "Nightrain" solo.

**GW** How are the parts split up live? Why do you take the verse solos in "Sweet Child" as opposed to, say, the lead in "Welcome to the Jungle"?

**THAL** There's not too much thought behind it. During rehearsals we'll be like, "Hey, you want this one?" It's pretty relaxed like that. And me, I don't really give a fuck. As long as in the end the song sounds good I don't care if I'm playing freaking kazoo parts. Whatever the song needs.

**GW** When you're playing something like the extended outro solo in "November Rain," which is pretty well ingrained in people's minds, how much do you keep to the script and how much is improvised?

**THAL** For a lot of the Guns stuff, the guitar melody is a major part of the song. Straying too far from what was originally recorded would be like changing the lyrics. So I like to respect the song. That said, with "November Rain" I tend to pretty disrespectfully go off and do whatever the hell I want! [laughs] In fact, I usually grab the fretless guitar for that one. But there's just a lot of creative freedom. No one says, "Don't play this," or "Don't wear that."

**GW** Creative freedom is not exactly something that Axl is known for. For example, it's been rumored that you were forced to start playing a Les Paul onstage with the band.

**THAL** That's completely untrue. I mean, for a while I was up there playing a guitar shaped like a giant foot, with wings coming out of the sides! Nothing could be further from a Les Paul! [laughs] But in many ways the Les Paul is the sound of Guns N' Roses. So I pulled out my old one and I use it on a lot of the stuff. But I also use a Parkwood acoustic, the Vigier fretless...a bunch of guitars.

**GW** You can hear the fretless on the verses in the officially released version of "Chinese Democracy." In the earlier, leaked versions, there's a gap in those spaces, which makes it easy to pinpoint your contribution to the song.

**THAL** Yeah, all those leaks are from before I started recording with the band. So probably in a few cases you'll be able to hear exactly what I added, and where, on the official release.

**GW** How did your parts come together? Would you listen to the demo versions and just try to see where you could fit in?

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# "ALL I KNOW IS AXL HAS A VISION, AND I TRUST THAT VISION."

**THAL** Some stuff came about just from playing the songs onstage over the years and figuring out where my part is in all of it. But a lot of it was just being in the studio and experimenting. Try something low, something high, try something that goes with the kick drum, try something that follows the vocals...I would try a hundred things per song for 10 hours at a time, just

blasting through every possible idea to see what jumped out. In the case of "Chinese Democracy," the fretless thing was one of the millions of things I was fucking around with, and everyone dug it. But I'm only on the rhythm track in that song. The solo is a mix between Robin and Buckethead.

**GW** You play the lead on the other song that was officially released before the

album, "Shackler's Revenge."

**THAL** Yeah, all the leads on that one are mine. I start off the main solo with the fretless guitar, hitting different harmonics and sliding them up the neck. People think that's a whammy bar, but it's all sliding harmonics, like something [British fretless bassist] Tony Franklin would do. Then for the second half of the solo I switch to a fretted-neck guitar and do some runs and noodly crap. I also alternate picked notes with thimble taps way up on the string, near the guitar's bridge, for those super-high sounds [Thal wears a metal sewing thimble on the pinkie of his picking hand, sounding notes beyond the guitar's standard range by tapping it against the string above the fretboard]. I'm actually having Vigier build me a double-neck with one fretless and one fretted neck, so that I'll be able to do that solo seamlessly onstage.

**GW** What gear did you use on *Chinese Democracy*?

**THAL** I had an old Marshall JCM800 that I brought in for a lot of my stuff. My whole thing is that I'm on an eternal quest to get that classic Eddie Van Halen sound. And I know I'll never get it, because I don't have his fingers, his energy, his body. But I try. For guitars, I brought in my Les Paul, my Foot guitar and my fretless. The Paul is an '89 reissue of a '59, and it sounds really nice. The majority of my parts on the album are that guitar through the 800, and then some times I added a [Boss] Blues Driver or a wah in front of the amp.

**GW** So now that the album's finally done, a large-scale tour seems imminent. Do you have any idea what the next few years of your life will look like?

**THAL** [laughs] Does anybody?

**GW** No, but your situation seems much more like a case of your hearing things on a need-to-know basis.

**THAL** I could inquire and probably find out a lot more, but I'm kinda happy doing things this way. It's the whole "ignorance is bliss" concept. I don't want to know things until I have to know them. In fact, my brain is so overloaded with everything right now that I want to know less. That way I can focus on just making music, and nothing else. I'd rather just wait until I'm right up to that bridge, and then I'll cross it.

**GW** It makes it easier for you to juggle those different balls.

**THAL** Exactly. I've been walking a little funny these past few years, trying to handle these lopsided balls. But I'm doing it. And besides, there are much worse things that people deal with. I could lose a limb. I could be battling a serious illness. My biggest problem to work around is that I gotta record and tour with Guns N' Roses? Fuck, I'll take it. \*

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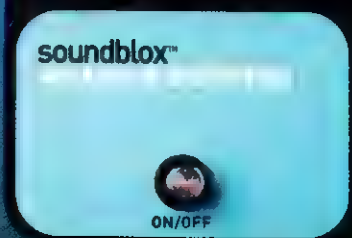
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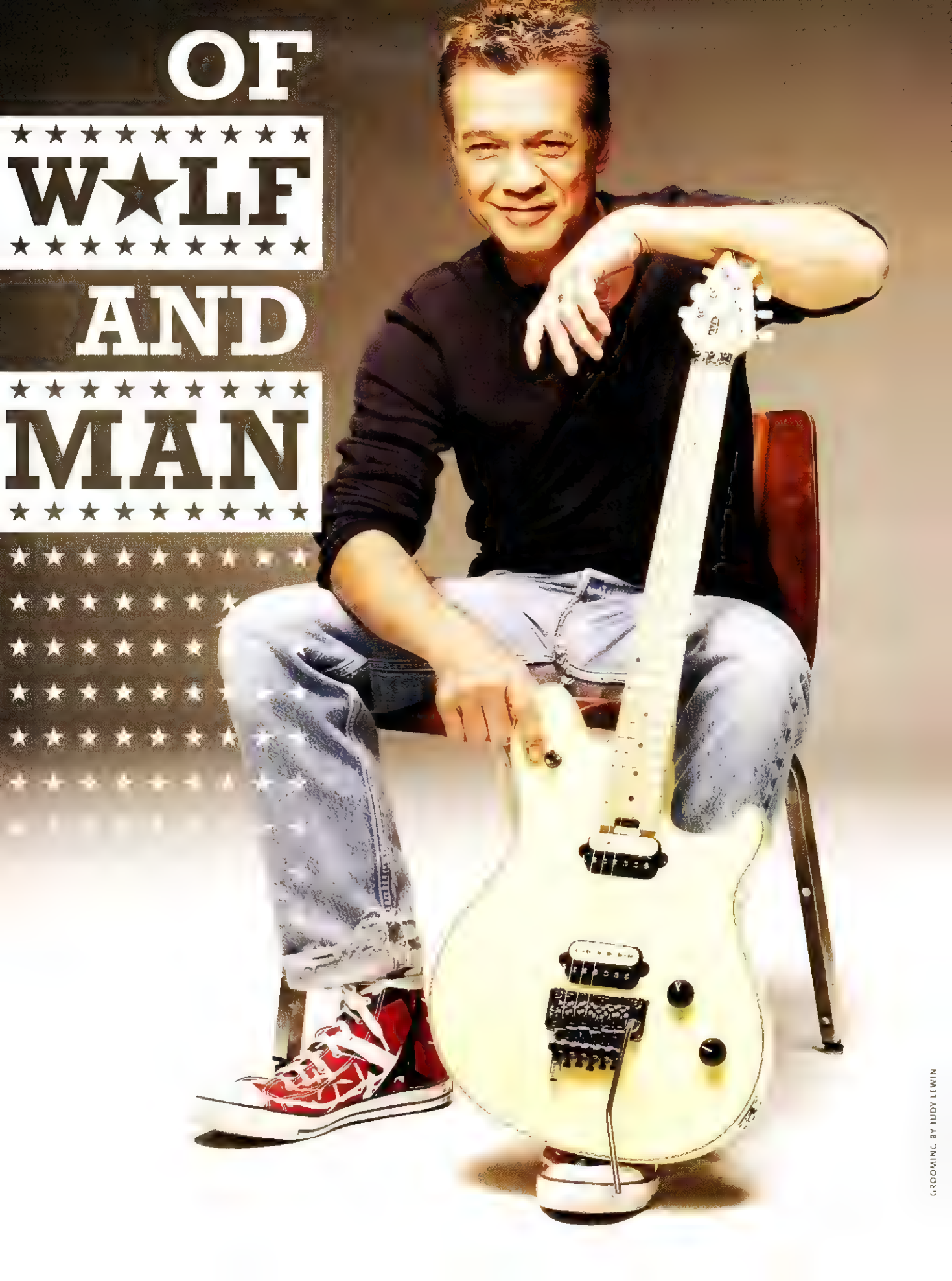
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# OF ★ W★LF ★ AND ★ MAN



Nearly two years in the making,  
**Eddie Van Halen's new EVH Wolfgang**  
guitar is the ultimate refinement of his  
classic signature ax. *GUITAR WORLD* gets a sneak  
preview and learns the story behind its transformation.

★ BY CHRIS CILL ★

PHOTOS BY CLAY PATRICK McBRIDE

LIVE PHOTOGRAPHY BY MATTHEW BRUCK







## DIARY OF A WOLFGANG HIGHLIGHTS FROM

5/06/06

The Wolfgang begins! Just when I thought I had my hands full with the "Frankenstein" project, Ed calls to say that I "get it" so he wants to me to reengineer the Wolfgang!



5/15/06

Finish prototype #1.

5/27/06

Ed calls and says, "This isn't basswood. What did you use? Alder?" I did use alder. Can't believe he heard the difference.





**T**HE PRODUCTION LINE where Eddie Van Halen's new EVH Wolfgang guitars are built delivers surprises and awe-inspiring sights around every corner. From the point where workers transform raw blocks of wood into the Wolfgang's distinctive archtop body shape to the final setup section, where a few dozen white-, black- and sunburst-finished models rest in quiet grandeur before shipment to their new homes, the factory buzzes with spirited activity.

But today's most impressive sight is a collection of about 30 EVH Wolfgang guitars hanging in a corner of a workshop tucked away upstairs. One glance at these guitars provides an instantaneous visual history of this model's development, from the early raw prototypes and numbered examples that were used to evaluate finish options, to an autographed version displaying Ed Van Halen's final seal of approval, to finished production models. Piles of pickups, necks and miscellaneous guitar parts scattered on a table suggest hints of the painstaking effort that went into making this guitar.

Ed Van Halen flashes his familiar smile as he pulls into the factory parking lot, but today it sparkles with distinct brilliance. Ed has plenty to be happy about these days, including the extremely successful Van Halen 2007-08 tour, which wrapped up in June. As Ed greets various staff members, he reveals that his girlfriend, Janie, who is accompanying him today, accepted his marriage proposal during their recent vacation in Hawaii.

Ed's smile becomes blindingly radiant when he walks into the workshop and sees all of the various incarnations of the EVH Wolfgang guitar gathered in one place. He began working on a new Wolfgang model in 2005 after he joined forces with FMIC (Fender Musical Instrument Corporation) to establish the EVH brand, but the project stagnated until Ed brought in Chip Ellis to collaborate with him in May 2006. (Chip had previously impressed Ed with his immaculate attention to detail on the EVH Frankenstein replica guitar.) Ed, Chip and Matt Bruck, Ed's partner at EVH, spent more than two years on the project. Nearly nine of those months were spent refining pickup designs, and prototypes were road tested on the Van Halen tour for several months more.

Ellis maintained a diary (shown as a timeline below) that captured every excruciating detail that went into the EVH Wolfgang's design, and it provides a fascinating glimpse at the passion of a master musician, his personal

"The only thing that's the same with the new Wolfgang is the body shape, and even that's changed a little bit," he says, comparing the EVH version with the previous Peavey model. "Everything else is different: the way the neck



Onstage at Cox  
Arena, San Diego,  
November 25, 2007

standards of quality and performance and his unwillingness to compromise. Although Ed shared a few minor specifics about the new Wolfgang guitar in our three previous interviews, today he reveals how nearly every feature and detail of the guitar was changed, redesigned or improved.

bolts on, the stainless-steel frets, tuning pegs, binding, pickups, tailpiece, pots and more. The finish is extremely thin, and the cavity is left unfinished to let the wood breathe and age better. Even the output jack is different."

Ed will formally introduce the EVH Wolfgang guitar to the public in January at the

## THE JOURNAL OF DESIGNER CHIP ELLIS

6/07/06

**Wolfgang prototype #2 is done.**

6/18/06

Ed tells me that the pickups are horrible.

8/17/06

Matt Bruck says that Ed wants to start getting sample pickups from outside vendors.



9/2/06

Install the new pickups in about an hour. Ed hits one note, lets it ring out, rolls back the volume and says, "No. I need it to hit me in the chest, not the stomach. Tell them more mids and not so harsh."

9/13-10/15/06

We go through six rounds of testing pickup samples.

2/25/07

I never get used to being in a room alone with Eddie Van Halen while he plays licks the world has never heard. I have been a fan of Van Halen since I was a kid and can't help but think how priceless moments like these are. People would kill to see what I'm seeing right now.



Winter NAMM convention, but today he's invited *Guitar World* to an exclusive sneak preview. Following a tour of the production line, Ed, Matt, Chip and I return to the upstairs shop where we gather around a worktable and spend the next few hours discussing the project. But even as they express relief at reaching a milestone with the EVH Wolfgang guitar, it's evident that this is just the start for this creative brain trust.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**GUITAR WORLD** This guitar represents the evolution of everything you've learned about guitars from modifying, building and designing your own instruments. Tell us about your quest to find your own sound and voice on the guitar.

**ED VAN HALEN** Ever since the beginning, everything that I picked up off the rack at a music store—even the custom-made stuff—did not do what I wanted it to. Either it didn't have enough of something, or it had a bunch of Bozo bells and whistles that I didn't need. A lot of it had to do with the fact that I never took lessons, so I didn't know right from wrong. I didn't know there were rules; I just knew what I liked and wanted to feel and hear. This also had a major impact on the way I play, doing things on the guitar that weren't written in any books.

I bought one of my first guitars from Lafayette Electronics, which was like a Radio Shack. They had a 12-string guitar that I really liked, but I didn't want 12 strings; I wanted six. I asked the sales guy if I could take six strings off and try it out, and he said, "No." I said, "Why not?" He said, "If you buy it, you can do whatever you want." So I bought it, took six strings off and loved it! And that was my very, very first successful attempt at changing something that was considered standard to my liking.

Later I bought a Goldtop Les Paul with soapbar pickups, but I didn't quite like the way they sounded. I wanted a humbucker. I got an old PAF from somewhere, took a chisel to make the pickup cavity bigger and crammed the pickup in the guitar. I only replaced the bridge pickup, not the neck one. Everyone who saw me play wondered how I got that sound from a soapbar pickup. They didn't realize I put a humbucker in there because my right hand would cover the pickup when I would play; all they could see was the neck pickup. I wasn't trying to fool anyone, but that was the sound I wanted. I also didn't like the way the gold finish looked, so I painted it black. These were some of the first

modifications I ever did to a guitar. Having the combination of two different pickups—which wasn't available then—gave me more of what I wanted and was a hint of things to come, including the striped paint job.

Then I bought a Gibson ES-335 that had one of those Maestro Vibrola wiggle sticks with the bent metal tailpiece, like you find on an SG. I liked it but it wouldn't stay in tune. I figured that maybe I could make the E, A and D string solid and just have the high three strings affected by the wiggle stick, so I sawed the Vibrola in half. My thought was that if the high three strings went out of tune, I would always be able to make it through a song playing chords that were on the low three strings that were in a fixed position—kinda like two guitars in one, a stop tailpiece and a wiggle stick on one guitar.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**"I'll be making music 'til the day I die. I've done all kinds of stuff, and more is coming."**

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I figured out how to hard-mount the low three strings, but I couldn't figure out how to bolt the wiggle stick part into the wood. I drilled a hole and put a huge screw in it, and it worked a little bit, but after a while the wood gave out amongst other problems.

I destroyed a lot of guitars trying to get them to do what I wanted, but I learned something from every guitar I tore apart, and discovered even more things. Things like if the string is

not straight from the bridge saddle to the nut, you're going to have friction. On most guitars the headstock is angled back which compounds the problem. When you press the vibrato bar down, the strings loosen from the bridge to the nut to the tuning peg. When you let up on the bar, the tuning does not return to the same point. So I got a brass nut, made the slots really big and put 3-in-One oil in the cuts where the string travels through the nut. Then I wound the strings up the tuning peg instead of down so the line from the bridge saddle to the nut to the tuning peg was straight as an arrow. Also, from the back of the guitar where you put the string through the block on a Fender tremolo tailpiece, every time I turned the tuning peg I would grab the ball end and turn it with every turn of the tuning peg, alleviating twist tension within the string itself. It worked really well. These are some of the discoveries I made that allowed me to use a standard vibrato and do the crazy shit I do and keep the guitar in tune.

I learned so many things along the way and incorporated all of them into building the "Frankenstein" guitar, which was originally painted black-and-white. On the first three or four Van Halen records, and especially live on tour, people were floored by how I could do all this crazy shit with a standard Fender tremolo and stay in tune.

I continued to putz with every aspect of a guitar. I even tried winding my own pickups. One thing I never liked about most other guitars is that the front and rear pickups were the same. When I would get the rear pickup sounding great, the front one would sound like mud. I didn't like that, so I tried winding the pickup less and more, using a heavier magnet and a lot of different things. For years I used just one pickup because I couldn't get the neck pickup to sound the way I wanted it to unless I changed the amp settings that were already dialed for the bridge pickup. I got different sounds through playing techniques.

Then I hooked up with some pickup companies and asked them to make me a different neck pickup. That helped. When I designed my Music Man guitar, that was the first time that the neck pickup was totally different from the bridge pickup. Then I started experimenting with the distance where the pickup was placed and the way it reacts with the string. I use my finger as a gauge. It's like this. [Ed plays harmonics on the low E string, working his way up the neck from the nut to the saddle.] There's

3/04/07

The latest round of pickups is still lacking. I have heard some of the best-sounding humbuckers I have ever heard, but they just aren't right for Ed and this guitar. Matt, Ed and I brainstorm improvements. I suggest we try every finish option from a rubbed oil finish to thick polyester to see what effect it has on the tone.



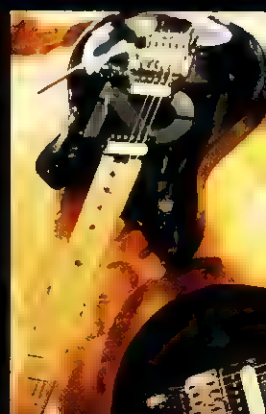
Ellis, Van Halen and Bruck

4/05/07

The eight finish test guitars are complete. I have numbered each guitar with a large stencil used for painting curbs at Fender. They look pretty cool.

4/07/07

I take the test guitars to \$150 today. I am amazed by the differences we hear between finishes. We choose two favorites: #4 and #6.





monic is the root. That's where you want the pole piece centered. I've checked other guitars and they just stick the pickups anywhere. That can cause all these dissonant overtones that make you go, "Shit! Where the hell did that come from?" Not many people know that. The pickup obviously picks up the sound from the strings. If it's underneath a dissonant harmonic, it's going to sound dissonant.

I also couldn't stand the high annoying feedback squeal that occurs playing at very high volumes. I thought maybe it was the actual coil windings vibrating that caused the feedback. I thought if I dipped a pickup in molten wax, when the wax cooled it would prevent the coil windings from vibrating. I took a coffee can, melted paraffin wax into it, dipped the pickup in the wax and pulled it out right before the bobbins would melt. I didn't always catch it in time. I ruined a lot of pickups that way. When I got it right... voila! It got rid of the squeal. This process I stumbled onto is now known as "potting," and it also became a standard process for manufacturing in the industry.

**GW** Although you've developed two previous signature models, you spent almost two years working with Chip to develop the new EVH Wolfgang guitar. Why did the process take so long?

**VAN HALEN** I'm constantly searching. We tore apart and analyzed every little thing on the new Wolfgang. If someone didn't make something that was good enough for us, we found someone to make it.

The new Wolfgang is a culmination of my 35 years of experimenting with guitars. Everything that I've destroyed, stumbled onto, learned and experienced in my journey to get to where we are now is in this guitar. And there is a lot more to come. A guitar is a very personal

extension of the person playing it. You have to be emotionally and spiritually connected to your instrument. I'm very brutal on my instruments, but not all the time. I'm not to the point where I'm like Pete Townshend and smashing

get is identical to what I use.

From the basics of the guitar to painstaking aspects like the binding and everything else, we redid everything on this guitar. That's why it took so long. Thank God that Chip stuck it out, because I was driving everybody nuts.

**GW** What was the most painstaking process about making this guitar?

**CHIP ELLIS** Developing the pickups.

**VAN HALEN** Chip would show up with a new batch of pickups, and all I had to do was plug into the new 5150-III amp and hit one note. Chip would look at me confused, but I can really tell by one note. Explaining sound is like trying to explain what something looks like to a blind person. It's very difficult. Over and over I would say, "It ain't hitting me in the gut!" It was either too shrill in the high end or too muddy. All it took was one note.

**ELLIS** I didn't get that at first. I wasn't tuned in to what Ed was thinking about pickups. When he would hit that one note, I would go, "That's it?" I couldn't hear it at first. Once Ed pointed it out to me, it was clear as day.

**VAN HALEN** Eventually, anybody will hear it. But the feel is what's really important. The harmonic overtones and the overall tone of a guitar all contribute to sustain and the feel, which has so much to do with how easy it is to play. A lot of factors come into play when it comes to making pickups, including placement, coil windings and magnets, et cetera.

**MATT BRUCK** We went through about 80 sets of pickups.

**VAN HALEN** The pickups were all great, but they weren't what we were looking for. Ultimately, we decided to try making our own pickups.



the shit out of it after a gig. I wouldn't do that to an instrument that is a part of me. I don't need to do this for financial reasons. I could have just stayed at home and built this guitar for myself. I do this because a lot of people ask if they can get what I use. Well, yes you can, and what you



**4/20/07**

Ed shows me his 5150 Kramer with an MXR volume knob. He says he always liked the way it felt on "Cathedral." The Wolfgang will now use MXR knobs.

**6/07/07**

Matt and Ed both want to try Fender's engineering staff for our next set of pickups. I have an engineer in mind named Seiki Goto.

**6/20/07**

Our first round with in-house pickups goes better than I expected. Ed invites me to stick around for Van Halen practice!

**6/29/07**

I take a new neck and a new set of pickups to 5150 today. Ed loves the pickups and says, "Done!" We all smile, group hug and reflect for a while on the last nine months.









this guitar to be held at the same level of esteem. **VAN HALEN** I don't want to sound arrogant, pompous or egotistical, but aesthetically I think this guitar is right up there with a Les Paul. And that's besides all of the work and the quality of the actual instrument and the components. It's simple, balanced and it feels right. It looks great, too.

If you have a great-sounding guitar that's a quality instrument and a good amp, and you know how to make the guitar talk, that's the key. It starts with the guitar and knowing what it should sound and feel like. Yesterday, I picked up the first two Wolfgang production models, and they felt even better than the main Wolfgang prototype that I used on the whole tour.

**GW** Taking this guitar on the biggest tour of the last two years to road test it was a very

the guitar. The painstaking effort that we took starting from scratch alleviated a lot of problems, which gave me the confidence to take it on tour. The tweaks that we did on the road were very minor because of all the preparation that we did.

**GW** What developments came about from taking the guitar on the road?

**VAN HALEN** The stainless-steel frets were a major breakthrough because of the amount of playing and bending that I do. I have to get my guitars refretted every couple of months. On the whole tour, the frets were great. They didn't wear out. Anyone who thinks they take away from the tone is crazy. It has nothing to do with tone.

**ELLIS** Before we tried using stainless-steel frets, Ed had the guitar only three weeks in rehearsal before the frets were gone. [Picks up



bold move.

**VAN HALEN** It had to be done. I don't let anything out unless I've dragged it around the block, taken it out on tour and beaten the living shit out of it. Playing on the road is an entirely different animal than playing in the studio. The guitar will get bounced around in the truck. You've got union guys slamming the cases around, and somebody might drop

Ed's #4 prototype] You played this guitar for half of the tour, and the fret job looks brand new [due to the stainless-steel frets]. We fixed the jack plate first, because the one on this guitar almost fell out during the first show. We changed it to a square, four-screw jack plate.

**VAN HALEN** Another big development was the pickup potting. After a while the windings started vibrating and creating that high squeal

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again. I asked Chip, "What are we going to do?"

**ELLIS** We decided to try double-dipping them. There was a little foam pad in the tremolo cavity, which I thought would be a good idea [to prevent feedback], but out the blue Ed asked me what was the deal with this black thing in the cavity. The guitar sounded a little muffled, and we thought it might be the pickup. When I went into the guitar pit Ed was in there ripping out the foam pad, going, "What the hell is this?"

**VAN HALEN** We modified the volume pot, because when I'm playing "Cathedral" most pots freeze up when I'm doing the volume swells. I'm constantly turning down the volume between all the breaks and pauses within the songs. The volume control is like my steering

3/10/07

I get a call from Ed. He tells me something I was hoping to hear—Van Halen are going on tour!

8/15/07

Meet Matt at Center Staging early in the morning. It is a very long day, but there is a hell of a payoff: I get to watch a full-blown rehearsal with David Lee Roth on the mic for the first time in over two decades. It is one hell of a private show!

11/25/07

I go to San Diego this morning to deliver a white prototype. Ed loves the new pickup design, color, binding and tuners. Ed plays a few riffs and asks for #4. "Something is different. It's too bright." It bothers Ed enough that he doesn't want to play it that night. I was hoping tonight was going to be a celebration for me at a VH show with my mom. It wasn't looking good. But then, as the lights come up, I see Ed playing the white Wolfgang! The celebration has begun.

11/27/07

Matt and Ed call this afternoon. Ed seems happy about the new Wolfgang. He has warmed up to it, and it's now his #1.

3/28/08

Ed asks me to come out to 5150 to discuss the Wolfgang. He has all three white Wolfgangs out. Ed looks at me, smiles and says, "Do you have a Sharpie on you?" I give him one, and he picks up the #2 white Wolfgang and writes "Approved by EVH, Congrats Chip!" across the top.





wheel. If it doesn't turn light, smooth and easy, and if it isn't quality, I'm fucked. I have to turn that thing up and down in an instant. I'm probably harder on it and use it more than anyone else, so it has to be durable.

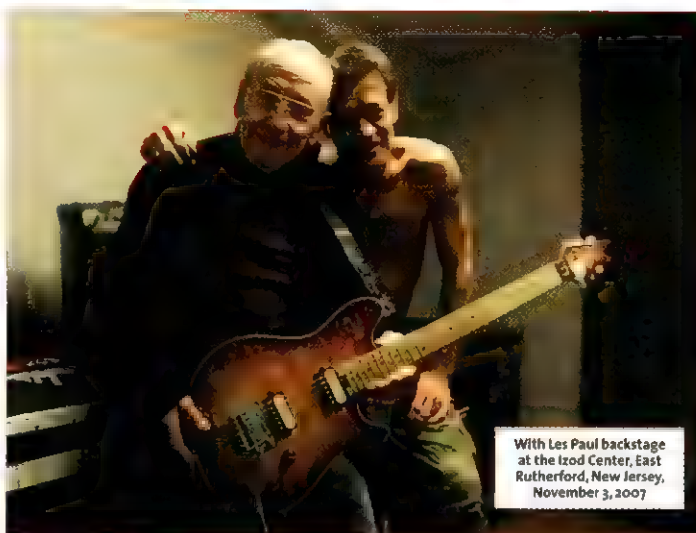
**BRUCK** It's a low-friction pot.

**ELLIS** We spent a couple of months going back and forth getting that right. Some of the first potentiometer samples we got from [electronic parts manufacturer] Bourns felt loose, so we made a few revisions.

Many players spend a lot of time tweaking their guitars. With this guitar we've done all of that for you. There's nothing left to do on it. Shame on you if you want to swap anything out on this guitar. You're not going to find anything better.

I'm surprised how versatile this guitar is. When I first got involved with this project I thought that we were just going to make something that was loud, nasty and would squeal like a pig when you wanted it to. But we did a lot of testing on the clean channel of the 5150-III. This guitar cleans up so nicely. You can play anything with it.

**BRUCK** It's Ed's instrument but it's applicable to many different styles of music. I'm really excited to see who picks up on it.



**VAN HALEN** It sounds great even when it's not plugged in. I need a totally resonant body. That just makes sense to me. What makes an acoustic guitar sound better than others? The wood and its resonance. It's the same with an electric guitar. The pickups are only there to amplify what the wood is doing. If you're amplifying a body made out of concrete, it's not going to sound very good no matter how good the pickups are. If the guitar sounds great unplugged, it should sound great when amplified, as long as you've paid attention to all the other aspects

and details as we have.

**GW** I understand that Chip made eight different guitars and numbered each one so you could test finish options without making biased assumptions.

**ELLIS** Guitar number 4 won the battle in the batch of eight guitars that we made. We tried everything from rubbing gunstock oil on the body, to a sealer, to thin-skin lacquer, heavy polyester and thick urethane. We ended up going with a very thin acrylic finish.

**VAN HALEN** And we left parts of the body exposed, so it breathes. A violin isn't sealed or clear coated on the inside of the body. With age it will only sound better.

**BRUCK** Whatever you put on top of the wood dampens its

resonating capability.

**ELLIS** This doesn't look like the typical production guitar that's covered in clear finish and everything is smooth as can be. It is more like a violin. The finish is thin enough that it doesn't negatively affect the sound. The finish is another essential part of the instrument.

**GW** You influenced many of the biggest guitar design advancements over the past 30 years, like the Floyd Rose tremolo and the D-Tuna. What's next?

**VAN HALEN** I don't sit around and think about

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what other people would like. I think about things that I want and need. That's where everything starts. I've got a patent on the Drop to Hell tailpiece. I've always been into down tuning, from the first record to "Unchained" to this day. I've replaced the low E string with a bass string. I always wanted to have a guitar where I could drop the low E string's tuning in an instant. This bridge drops from E to A as quickly as you can flick the lever, and you can go anywhere in between or even lower if you want. And it's built like a brick shit house. It will not break.

**BRUCK** The engineering precision on that tailpiece is incredible. Nothing is loose. And the concept has room to grow. It works on one string right now, but it could affect all six strings.

**VAN HALEN** If you want what I use, we've made it available. The stuff that I use onstage isn't modified. My modifications are built into my guitars and amps when they come off the line.

**BRUCK** One of the primary concepts of Ed having his own brand was that we wanted to be able to visit any EVH dealer in the world on the day of the gig, grab a 5150 and a Wolfgang and do the gig, and there would be no difference between it and Ed's gear.

**ELLIS** This guitar is designed around Ed's setup, which is engineered into every one of these guitars that we make. Everything is pre-calculated. The neck pocket is set to exactly the right angle. The pickup cavities mount the pickups at the exact height where Ed likes it.

We just screw them directly into the wood.

The bridge sits flat in the cavity. You can literally take the body out of the paint department, put the neck, parts and strings on it, and the action is exactly where it needs to be. Thanks to the graphite reinforcements that we put in the neck, it stays stable when we ship a guitar across the country.

**VAN HALEN** My guitars get subjected to all kinds of crazy temperatures on tour. It can sit in the back of a cold truck for 16 hours and then be brought into a warm venue. Even during the walk from the dressing room to the stage the temperature can change drastically. I would turn the studio temperature down to about 55 degrees and then take this guitar out in the sun, and it wouldn't change. And it's so easy to adjust the truss rod. You just insert the Allen wrench and you're done.

**GW** Now that you've completed a new guitar and amp you must be very inspired. I would think that some new songs lurk in this gear.

**VAN HALEN** I'm always inspired. It's things like the new Wolfgang and Drop to Hell tailpiece becoming a reality that keeps me pushing the limits of what's possible. I'll be making music 'til the day I die. I've done all kinds of stuff, and more is coming. I can't tell you exactly when right now. Wolfgang is in the 12th grade, and he needs to graduate first. Then I'm getting married in June. We'll pick it up after that.

**GW** With this guitar it seems like you have come as close to perfection as ever. But it also

seems like you haven't stopped searching.

**VAN HALEN** I don't know if there is such a thing as perfection. But this is the best of everything that we could find with these three minds making it happen. I'm always changing, so even "the best" is a tough word for me to define.

**GW** It's very generous for you to share your knowledge with other guitarists and musicians. After all, you could have just turned this into a one-off custom instrument for yourself.

**VAN HALEN** That's the whole point. It's not just for me, it's for everyone. We're not just shipping stuff out for the almighty buck. The Wolfgang had better outlive me and last forever. My name and my son's name are on it. It's not a fad. It's my 35 years of knowledge of what makes a sweet, sexy, toney, quality, indestructible instrument. I'm very proud of it. Initially I was very worried about working with Fender because of all the bullshit you can go through with a huge company. But in a great way they proved me wrong. They rose to every occasion and gave me the freedom to create and bring my vision to fruition. Fender is my home. It took me a long time to get here, but it's a good marriage, and I'm proud to have this team that has stuck with me through all of this.

The best thing of all, when you do all the things we did and get and get those things right, you end up with a great instrument that will inspire anybody to make great music and enjoy it. This guitar just makes you want to play. After all you don't work music, you play it! ★

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# MEDIEVAL TIMES

**RITCHIE BLACKMORE REFLECTS** on his decades of fascination with Renaissance music and talks about his latest endeavors to blend electric guitar with old-world instruments on the Blackmore's Night album *Secret Voyage*.

BY ANDY ALEDORT

"I'VE ALWAYS BEEN VERY INTENSE about anything I wanted to do. I think that's part of my character, being intense about whatever it is I want to get into, whether it's research, or kicking a ball around in soccer, or playing the guitar, or delving into medieval and Renaissance music. I can't just do things passively; I have to really study something and try to figure it out."

Ritchie Blackmore—by any estimation one of the greatest and most important rock guitarists ever to have lived—is discussing his fascination with the type of music he plays with Blackmore's Night, the band he leads with his wife, Candice Night, and has been dedicated to since the band's 1997 debut, *Shadow of the Moon*. The group's seventh and latest album, *Secret Voyage* (SPV), blends medieval and Renaissance-era melodies with Night's original lyrics and Blackmore's acoustic and electric guitar mastery.

It hasn't always been thus, of course. The British guitarist found fame initially as a member of heavy metal pioneers Deep Purple, from 1968 to 1975, and wrote what is probably rock's best-known riff with the smash hit "Smoke on the Water." He continued to court success with Rainbow from 1975 to 1984, first with singer Ronnie James Dio and, afterward, with Joe Lynn Turner. In 1984, Blackmore reunited with former Deep Purple bandmates Ian Gillan, John Lord, Roger Glover and Ian Paice and released the very successful *Perfect Strangers* album. Tensions between Blackmore and Gillan led to Blackmore's departure and the reformation of Rainbow, from 1993 to 1997. From then forward, he directed his energies into Blackmore's Night.

As a guitarist, Ritchie Blackmore is truly one of a kind. Though he emerged at a time when the competition was

quite stiff—his contemporaries included the likes of Jimi Hendrix, Jeff Beck, Jimmy Page and Eric Clapton—Blackmore possessed a wholly distinct rock style that proved as powerfully innovative as any of his peers, and with it he pushed the limits of technical brilliance and virtuosity to unprecedented heights. Intrinsic to his unique approach was the incorporation into the rock genre of classical themes and, for the time, very unusual scales and modes such as Phrygian, Phrygian dominant and harmonic minor.

"I was initially inspired to explore that direction because of my love of classical music," Blackmore explains. "I was obviously into rock guitar playing, but I was also very attracted to the classical overtones. Above all, we, as a band, approach this music with a spirit of creativity."

Within the context of Blackmore's Night, the legendary guitarist explores traditional English, Celtic, Hungarian and Russian folk musical forms, as well as pre-Baroque Renaissance music from every corner of the globe. On *Secret Voyage*, Ritchie's distinct musical signature propels such standout tracks as "Toast to Tomorrow," which finds its roots in medieval Russia, "Gilded Cage," which utilizes 17th century French musical forms as its inspiration, the propulsive "Locked in a Crystal Ball" and the solo instrumental showcase "Prince Waldeck's Galliard."

**GUITAR WORLD** Can you describe your musical modus operandi for the latest Blackmore's Night release, *Secret Voyage*?

**RITCHIE BLACKMORE** A good place to start is the track "Locked in a Crystal Ball." The melody of that song is taken from the *Cantigas de Santa Maria* [a manuscript that repre-







Blackmore onstage with Deep Purple in the Seventies

sents the epitome of the Mediterranean medieval musical phenomena], actually written by King Alfonso X in Spain back in the 1200s. Very old, great tune. Medieval and Renaissance music of this type is the kind of music I listen to most of the time. Candice wrote some new words for that melody, which is something I'm sure would annoy the purists out there. There are purist Renaissance bands that exist today that frown on that type of thing, because the song was originally written in Latin and was a religious song that was sung in church.

We tend to do that a lot: take a melody from very old music, from way back in the past, and I'll come up with a chord progression that is true to music of that era. Then Candi will write words for it, or change the words, and make it, not more modern, but our interpretation of it.

That's the bottom line with us: we are musical nomads, because no one else is doing what we're doing. If other musicians do the old music, they tend to do it in a very traditional form, exactly how it was written. We like to mess with it a bit, which I think is how the minstrels back in those days would have done it. Oftentimes, the minstrels in those days could not read music, so they would improvise on a theme that they'd heard in the other village, which would result in interpretive changes in the music.

**GW** Has your study of this music included a look at written manuscripts of medieval and Renaissance music, along with listening to various recordings?

**BLACKMORE** Yes, and what I find fascinating—amongst a lot of other things that I find

fascinating with this music—is that, when they did write the music out, they'd hardly ever write out the timing, so one couldn't determine how the phrasing was intended to sound just from reading it. For the musicians reading the music back then, a lot was left to the individual's interpretation. This is true for many of the notes, too.

I think that's great. When you are reading a piece of music that was written back in the 1300s and 1400s, it's debatable what some of the actual notes really were. That's why

you can hear so many different versions of the same piece of music. I follow this type of music very closely, and I'll hear the same tune played in many different ways, with different notes. So this type of music was always open to the interpretation of the performer. In that era, it seems that as long as you were within two notes of the actual note, it was okay!

**CANDICE NIGHT** Even when we are working something that is based firmly on an old Renaissance song, Ritchie is such an improvisational player that, every time we play it, he interprets the music in new and different ways. He breathes new life into these songs with the way he relates to the music, and expresses himself within it. I don't think it's a conscious thing with him; it's just the way he plays.

**GW** So, for example, on a song like "Locked in a Crystal Ball," are the single-note lines you play between the verses and vocal phrases improvised?

**BLACKMORE** Yes, that's right.

**NIGHT** So much of what Ritchie plays is improvised, and I think that's one of the biggest challenges. Renaissance music, in its purest form, is so rigid and regimented. It's very strict.

**BLACKMORE** To me, one of my weaknesses is sticking within a rigid musical form. So I'm attracted to that challenge of trying to play within the structure while still operating as a free-form type of player.

**GW** Is finding your own angle and approach to this music part of the endeavor, as opposed to sticking to faithful recreations?

**BLACKMORE** Absolutely. I wasn't schooled to play this music in the traditional sense, but it really excites me when I hear it played in its

Blackmore and Night





**“We are musical nomads, because no one else is doing what we’re doing.”**

purest form. My contribution is to take it into another realm, which is a little bit of rock and blues thrown in there, disguised. I don’t do a lot of string bending when I’m playing this music, but I’ll certainly be thinking almost like a blues/classical player. If anyone is really into this music, they usually stick to how it was played, or how they *think* it was played, back in those days.

Candice and I will often sit down and play this music like a real purist medieval band. I’ll be playing the mandola [an eight-stringed instrument having four paired strings tuned in unison] or the nyckelharpa [a stringed instrument played with a bow and fingered with keys rather than a fretboard], and she’ll be playing

the shawm [the oboe’s predecessor], and we’ll say, “This is exactly what the purists would want.” But then we’ll say, “Ah, let’s make sure there’s a drum thing in there, and let’s add synthesizers and flutes,” because we really would rather be interpreters than recreationists. One of the strangest compliments I ever got was, “I don’t like Renaissance music, but

I love your band!” Yet we’re playing Renaissance-inspired music.

**GW** Your interest in the incorporation of classical themes with rock is well represented by many Deep Purple and Rainbow recordings, one such example being Deep Purple’s 1969 release, *Concerto for Group and Orchestra*, recorded with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

**BLACKMORE** That was an experiment, and that was more Jon’s [Lord, Deep Purple keyboardist] world. It wasn’t my world; I felt very awkward. I was supposed to play a 24 bar solo with the violins behind me, and of course I ended up playing like 52 bars instead. So I even messed that up! The conductor had to bring in the violins after my solo, and he was just looking at me, hovering...[laughs], “We’re now into the 52nd bar; it was supposed to be over at 24. When is he going to stop?!” And of course the violinists were all holding their ears!

**GW** In the YouTube videos of that performance you can see that some of them were actually smiling.

**BLACKMORE** They were smiling because they were thinking, Who are these... Everyone was complaining about my amplifier being too loud.

**GW** Have you had to change anything in regard to your playing technique in order to play the music of Blackmore’s Night?

**BLACKMORE** Yes, I have. I’ve had to come to terms with some real challenges since taking on this endeavor. It can be incredibly exhilarating and also incredibly depressing, because I have now adopted a different playing technique. In the old days, I always played with a pick, and that was the end of it. Nowadays I’m playing mostly fingerstyle because a lot of the time I am accompanying Candice’s singing, without the band, and I have to cover the bass lines and the chords simultaneously. So this plays its part in everything I write, because I write with the application in mind that I have to cover all of the parts.

Deep Purple backstage at the *Top of the Pops* TV show in the early Seventies; (from left) Blackmore, Roger Glover, Ian Paice, Ian Gillan and John Lord



Performing in New York City, October 2000





**“The end result is so much more important than me showing off and playing exercises on guitar.”**

What's complicated about it is that I now have two styles: one is fingerstyle and the other is electric plectrum-style. I utilize both onstage, and it takes a few moments to get comfortable switching from one to the other. If I'm playing fingerstyle and I have to switch immediately to using a pick, my picking takes a minute to kick in. It's like, "Wake up!" The truth is that I never practice picking anymore, because I'm usually playing fingerstyle when I play at home.

**GW** Many guitar fans view your Seventies-era incorporation of classical themes, along with nods to medieval scales and melodies, as the foundation of the neoclassical rock movement. Have you always had an interest in medieval and Renaissance music?

**BLACKMORE** I got into the type of music that we're doing now when, at the age of nine, I first heard "Greensleeves." This choirboy sang it at school, and the song moved me so much; it took me back to another time. Ever since then, that song has remained at the back of my mind.

**NIGHT** I think any fan of Ritchie's can see the reflections of that influence in a lot of the music he's played over the years, such as his versions of "16th Century Greensleeves" with Rainbow and Deep Purple. "Temple of the King" is another great example, and there are a lot of songs wherein the Renaissance era is reflected.

**BLACKMORE** "Greensleeves" is a great example of the beauty of the medieval musical form, because it revolves around the harmonic structure of parallel fourths and parallel fifths, exactly the stuff you would hear being played on shawms.

**NIGHT** We have all of those instruments, like the cornamuse—which is the true predecessor to the oboe—and the rauschpfeife, which are both double-reed instruments, as well as the gemshorn, which is actually a cow's horn.

**GW** Candice, were you playing this type of music from a young age?

**NIGHT** No, I'd never even heard Renaissance or medieval music before I met Ritchie. The genesis of that music's influence on me started when I would visit Ritchie at his big, old dark Tudor house in the middle of the Connecticut



Performing in 2000.

woods at the beginning of our relationship, and this was the type of music he listened to at home all of the time. He had his own "minstrel's gallery" [a balcony from which musicians can perform] up there, and that music would fill the house. For myself, I can find so much inspiration in nature itself, and this type of music strikes me as the perfect soundtrack to nature; if you were walking through the woods, this music suits that feeling so well. The same can't be said of most of the music you'd hear when you turn on the radio today. Most modern music makes me feel annoyed, rather than feeling inspired, or melancholy, or reflective, or uplifted.

**GW** Do you use some of these Renaissance-era instruments on *Secret Voyage*?

**BLACKMORE** Yes, we did. I'm obsessed with instrumental Renaissance dance music, and I probably always have been. We're talking about music from the 1400s to 1600s. After that, you start to get into early baroque and more symphonic music. At first, I would adapt all of those melodies that really thrilled me to the guitar, but later on I began to learn to play some other instruments, like the mandola, the mandocello

[a member of the mandolin family with a scale longer than the mandolin] and the hurdy-gurdy.

A hurdy-gurdy is a chromatic, two-octave stringed instrument with a handle that you have to turn while you play. Turning the handle causes a rosined wheel to vibrate the strings, similar to the way a bow is used on violin, and there is a keyboard that is used to sound specific pitches, as well as a drone string, or many drone strings. A lot of people think a hurdy-gurdy has a monkey on it [laughs], but it doesn't. I learned to play one of those, too.

My latest acquisition is the nyckelharpa. It is an instrument that comes from Sweden and works in a way similar to the hurdy-gurdy except that you have to bow the strings instead of turning a wheel. I played that instrument on the song, "The Circle," from *Secret Voyage*. So while also learning more about this music that I am so fascinated by, I'm now learning to play all of these instruments that were used when this music was first performed. The only instruments I can't relate to are the woodwind instruments, and that's where Candi comes into the picture. Anything to do with strings, I can get into. I played the cello for about seven



or eight years, so it's easy for me to relate to the nyckelharpa. It's a bit of a strange instrument, but when it's played properly, it resonates so much with the soul. It sounds fantastic; it's like hearing rock and roll guitar for the first time.

I have a guy that makes my hurdy-gurdies, and I asked him what got him interested in the instrument. He said that he originally made guitars, but the first time he heard a hurdy-gurdy plugged into an amplifier, he said, "That was it! It was so breathtaking, I never made another guitar!" His name is Helmut Gotschy, and he is the chief maker of all of the German hurdy-gurdies for the medieval movement going on over there. It's much more prevalent in Europe than it is here. If you go to a Renaissance gathering over

here, they tend to simply strum Celtic music instead of offering something more representative of the era.

It was very funny when I was first learning to play the hurdy-gurdy. My producer, Pat Regan, who is very good at patching things up, said, "Just play!" I was playing so many wrong notes, I was laughing my head off. But he said, "Keep playing, keep playing!" Out of that solo, he cut it up and made it sound like I could actually play the thing. He took out all of the crap and pitched a few other things, and I couldn't believe it when I heard it.

**NIGHT** You should hear him play it in concert now. It's amazing.

**BLACKMORE** I've got a handle on it now, no pun intended.

**"Jimmy Page told me once that he based many of his solos on sax solos, and therein lies the attraction to distortion."**

**GW** Had you ever tried to play any of these unusual instruments when you were in your teens or twenties? And did you every try playing the lute?

**BLACKMORE** No, this is all in more recent years. And I never related to the lute. From 1970 onward, the music that I was listening to the most was medieval dance music played by David Munrow and the Early Music Consort of London. They were playing the real stuff from the 1500s. What got me really entranced with that music was the woodwinds and the brass, not the guitars. The guitar took a backseat to a variety of other instruments in that era.

**GW** Many electric guitar players express an attraction to reed instruments and brass because the sound is produced by the breath, which enables one to achieve much greater sustain than that of a vibrating string.

**BLACKMORE** That's very true. Jimmy Page told me once that he based many of his solos on sax solos, and, of course, therein lies the attraction to distortion. It is usually accompanied by increased sustain.

What is so interesting, too, is that, when you start using these organic period-faithful instruments that I've become obsessed with, you can run into a lot of trouble trying to work in a synthesizer. Synthesizers tune *perfectly*, but with any organic, old-world instrument, especially shawms and hurdy-gurdies, they go in and out of tune constantly. When all of the old instruments are together, it works; throw in a synthesizer and you're in trouble. I came to realize that having any synths or electronic keyboards on there would make everything sound sterile. To get the hurdy-gurdy in tune with the keyboard, it has to be pitched up digitally, and that just ruins the character of the hurdy-gurdy.

So in the studio, we're torn between carrying the music through with just the organic instruments, or have a synthesizer and a bass; as soon as you have a bass, the music becomes "modern." In the old days, they wouldn't use a bass guitar, but they'd use a bass drum, which supplied just one or two pitches. As soon as you add a bass guitar, you go forward three hundred years.



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**NIGHT** It's things like this that make us feel we are constantly being taught by this project. When we first started out, most of the instrumentation was done on synthesizer. Slowly, we started incorporating the organic instruments, and it was on *Fires at Midnight* [2001] that we started using the shawms. Suddenly, we were faced with, "Uh oh...how do we pitch this?" and "How do we triple-track it to make it sound big?" and "What effect can go on it that won't make it sound like a synthesizer and will allow it to keep its organic sound?"

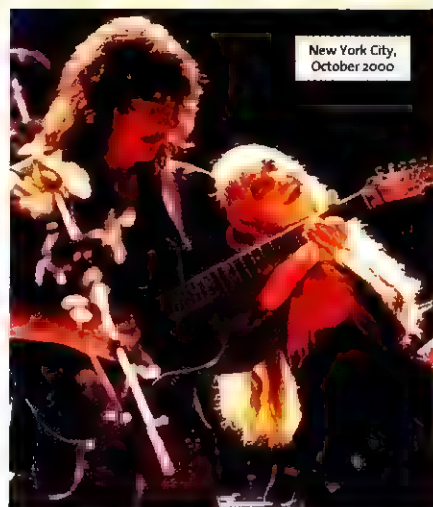
The next thing that happened was that we really wanted to get into the real instruments, so that's when the hurdy-gurdies and the rauschpfeifes came along. And it's easier when

the two of us can play these different instruments, because we don't have to call someone else to come over and do it.

**BLACKMORE** There are really only three people in the band, though onstage there are usually seven or eight.

**NIGHT** And we both play the hurdy-gurdy now. So it's really a constant learning process, and each time we put a new album out, the songs pull us in some new directions. It never gets boring, because we are always learning something new.

**BLACKMORE** I'm always torn between making a track purely organic, with just shawms, lutes, mandolas and percussion, or getting into a highly produced thing, with a synthe-



sizer used to create effects. Sometimes we fall down the middle, because we do both, like on "Locked in a Crystal Ball." If you listen, there's an electric rock and roll guitar in there; I'm playing my Fender Strat over a medieval song. That can be *dangerous*, because it could end up sounding so incongruous. If you try playing rock solos over a very strict melody that was written in the 1200s, you've got to watch it.

**GW** And that's exactly what you ended up doing.

**BLACKMORE** That's right, but we were in two minds with that tune. In the beginning, I was just playing mandolas and Candi was playing the shawms, and we were going to leave it like that. And we probably would have sold about two copies, to the purists only. But we thought, well, we've got a producer, let's bring in all of the guns!

**NIGHT** And the next thing you know, we have 98 tracks! [laughs] And we end up saying, "What can we take out? It's too much!"

**BLACKMORE** That's one of my biggest dilemmas: Being that I'm so into the organic, old music, I sometimes don't want to water it down to make it more palatable for a less adventurous audience, one that says, "Oh well, if I don't hear an electric guitar, I don't want to buy it." Because there are times when an electric guitar will sound *wrong*.

**NIGHT** One of the songs from our *Village Lanterne* album is called "25 Years," and Ritchie had recorded an amazing electric guitar solo for it. When he heard it back, he said, "You know what? It doesn't call for a guitar solo, so let's take it off and put a hurdy-gurdy solo on."

**BLACKMORE** The older you get, the more you realize that the end result is so much more important than me showing off and playing exercises on guitar. But whether we are using period instruments or not, we are still approaching what we do with a musically creative attitude.

**NIGHT** There are so many brilliant bands out there playing this music in a purist style, and Ritchie loves listening to that stuff. It's a part of what's kept him so passionate about music. We like to draw from that inspiration and take the music to a new place. 🌟

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# SLASH AND BURST

CHILDREN OF BODOM'S ALEXI LAIHO AND ROOPE LATVALA TAKE YOU THROUGH THE TWISTS AND TURNS OF THEIR LATEST OFFERING, "BLOODDRUNK."

BY MATT SCHARFGLOSS  
PHOTOS BY ANGELA BOATWRIGHT

ON  
DISC

**C**HILDREN OF BODOM guitarist Roope Latvala has a method for enduring almost four minutes of relentless, palm-muted, machine-gun 16th-note triplets without his arm cramping up. "I drink a lot of water," he explains. "It makes up for the electrolytes I lose when I sweat—and when I play like that, I sweat a lot. I'm a sweaty pig," he says with a laugh, clarifying the point.

Latvala and Alexi Laiho, his coguitarist and Children of Bodom's frontman, are visiting *Guitar World's* New York office, fresh from a trans-Atlantic red-eye, to break down the musical concepts behind "Blooddrunk," the title track from the Finnish metal group's latest full-length release.





Roope Latvala



Alexi Laiho

After establishing the song's tuning, drop D down one whole step (low to high, C G C F A D), Laiho and Latvala demonstrate the song's first theme, a rapid, fluid, four-bar triplet-based keyboard melody doubled by Laiho (as shown in bars 5-8 in the transcription, page 130), with muscular rhythm backing provided by Latvala. The trick to mastering Laiho's part is not so much in nailing the notes cleanly but in making good use of fretboard positions. Indeed, the riff becomes much easier to play once you think of it as a series of two-beat patterns played in specific positions.

The first two beats of each bar are played in 10th position (index finger at the 10th fret), while beats three and four in bars 5-7 are in 12th position. So instead of concentrating on note order first, simply alternate between 10th position (on beats one and two) and 12th (on beats three and four), using proper fingering, and the note order will come more naturally. This melody appears again in section D (page 132) and then once more and a whole step higher in the song's interlude (section G). Simply take the riff and transpose it two frets higher.

Laiho's solo (section J, page 135) begins with a series of deliberately dissonant and nasty-sounding unison bends in bars 66 and 67. The guitarist doesn't shy away from incorporating noise to enhance the mood—note the pick scrape and random “hammer-on from nowhere” in bar 66 and the open G-string dive bombs in bar 67. Laiho then makes use of the F# minor pentatonic box pattern in bar 68, including a wide two-whole-step bend off the A note at the 17th fret on the high E string.

The fast run in bar 71 is based on an A Lydian scale pattern (A B C# D# E F# G# A), using the 14th, 16th and 17th frets for

**“EVEN IF YOU CAN ONLY GIVE YOURSELF MICROSECOND BREAKS, IT PRESSES THE ‘RESET’ BUTTON.”—LATVALA**

the first two beats. Laiho then slides up to the 21st fret in beat three for a cascading A major scale pattern that works its way up the high E string. To execute this single-string run seamlessly, slide up to each highest note in the phrase using your ring finger. For example, when you come to the D at the 22nd fret near the end of beat three, slide into it from the C# at the 21st fret and then again when you reach the 24th fret during beat four. Again, proper fretboard positioning will help you get this phrase under your fingers faster.

The aggressive rhythm parts to “Blooddunk” are just as integral to the song as its fleet-fingered lead sections. The aforementioned rapid-fire palm-muted 16th-note triplets appear throughout the song, most notably in the chorus (section F in the transcription) and the bridge (section H). Keep your wrist relaxed, and use a pick of at least moderately heavy thickness—you don't want a wimpy, thin pick bending against the string while you're trying to articulate a flurry of fast-moving notes.

The song's bridge (page 134) introduces a different feel, wherein the straight triplet rhythms we've been hearing thus far become more complex. Beginning in bar 54, Laiho and Latvala play fast 16th notes at

the fourth fret on the detuned sixth string. Such picking requires a balance of finesse and stamina, and to maximize the latter, Laiho suggests emphasizing accents on downbeats. “Say you have a group of four 16th notes—try to accent the first note of the group and hit it harder than the other ones. It'll groove, but you won't have to kill yourself just hitting everything as hard as you can all the time.”

Adds Latvala, “Even if you can only give yourself microsecond breaks, it kind of presses the ‘reset’ button.”

To get through this section relatively unscathed, think of each beat as being comprised of three eighth-note triplets. Pick each of these triplets with downstrokes, and be sure to accent them per Laiho's advice and use relaxed upstrokes to pick any 16th notes that fall between the cracks. For example, for the first two beats of bar 54, the picking order would be “down down-up down-up down down down” (downstrokes are italicized to indicate accents). Picking in this fashion should help propel the groove while staving off fatigue in your picking arm.

On beats three and four of bars 55 and 57, Laiho and Latvala launch into fast runs based on the F# natural minor scale (F# G# A B C# D E F#). Again, be mindful of fretboard positioning to facilitate accuracy. \*









# SWING

## Alex Skolnick

**DETAILS THE CONCEPTS BEHIND HIS BRILLIANTLY ADAPTED JAZZ-TRIO ARRANGEMENT OF THE HARD-ROCKING KISS CLASSIC**

### "Detroit Rock City."

**T**HOSE OF YOU FAMILIAR with my work in both Testament and the Alex Skolnick Trio (featuring Matt Zebroski on drums and Nathan Peck on bass) know I have multiple sides to my musical personality and playing style. I've always loved hard rock and metal since I was a kid, and as an adult I have become equally passionate about jazz, as well as various forms of world music.

In this lesson I'm going to detail the thinking and structure behind my straight-ahead jazz trio (clean guitar, acoustic bass and drums) arrangement of the Kiss song "Detroit Rock City," as featured on the Alex Skolnick Trio album *Goodbye to Romance: Standards for a New Generation*, and also discuss the project's conception and development.

#### **BRINGING HARD ROCK AND METAL TO JAZZ**

**THE WHOLE CONCEPT OF** taking a hard rock or metal song and reinventing it as a jazz arrangement came to me a few years back, when I was fervently studying jazz guitar full-time at the New School (a university in New York City). At the time, I was hearing jazz rhythms in my head night and day, and some of the melodies from my favorite rock and metal songs that were embedded in my brain from my youth were comingling with these jazz rhythms in my mind's ear. This manifested



itself in several ways, such as when I would go to improvise a jazz solo and find myself throwing in quotes from well-known melodies, which, by the way, is a time-honored jazz tradition, as practiced by greats such as Charlie Parker and Wes Montgomery.

One day I was soloing over a stock i-vi<sup>9</sup>-VI-V jazz progression in the key of A minor (Am F<sup>7</sup>m7<sup>5</sup> F7 E7) that was set to an even- (or "straight") eighths bossa nova feel and decided to try quoting the verse vocal melody from the well-known Scorpions song "No One Like You," which happened to fit perfectly in this context! (The idea had actually come to me in a

Skolnick with (left) Nathan Peck and Matt Zebroski



dream the night before.) One thing led to another, and before long my bandmates and I came up with a neat instrumental arrangement of the entire song and decided to feature it in our live set. The tune felt so good and inspiring for me to improvise over, more so than any jazz standard I had ever learned, and audiences would consistently recognize the tune and respond very positively to it.

So we realized we were onto something cool and novel and needed another "hit" tune. With this concept in mind, one day we were jamming on an up-tempo swing minor blues in the key of C minor, and the idea came to me to quote the vocal melody from "Detroit Rock City," which happens to be played at a similar, albeit slower, tempo and in the same key. [The original version of the song, as heard on Kiss' 1976 album *Destroyer*, is actually performed as if it were in the key of C<sup>+</sup> minor, with all instruments tuned down one half step.] Additionally, the song is based on an eighth-note triplet rhythm, which is also the foundation of the swing feel, so it lent itself well to a jazz interpretation.

\*All examples performed on electric guitar with a clean tone (neck pickup on)

FIGURE 1 "Detroit Rock City" verse melody, first phrase (Skolnick arrangement)

Fast Swing ♩ = 208 (♩ = ♩♩♩) (all examples)

melody: N.C. (Cm7) chord fill

\*On the video lesson that appears on this month's CD-ROM, Alex's guitar is tuned slightly flat of concert pitch

FIGURE 2 Wes Montgomery-style octaves

N.C. (Cm7)

FIGURE 3

C5 Ab5 Eb5 Bb5

FIGURE 4

Cm7 Abmaj7

DIAGRAM 1

Cm7 Abmaj7 Dm7b5(add4) G7b9(13)

\*finger 4 note added as part of melody

DIAGRAM 2

Cm11 Cm(add9) Abmaj7 \*Fm11 Dm7b5 G7b9(#9)

\*may be substituted for Abmaj7

DIAGRAM 3

Fsus4 F

FIGURE 5

Cm7



## PLAYING OVER A SWING GROOVE

ALTHOUGH IT IS BUILT around a triplet rhythm, the vocal melody to "Detroit Rock City" felt a little too "on the beat" for an instrumental jazz adaptation, and I decided it would be stylistically appropriate to make the melody a bit more syncopated by playing some of the notes a half a beat, or an eighth note, early and holding them over into the following downbeat. I worked out the phrasing by playing around with the melody over an up-tempo swing groove, both jamming with the trio and on my own with the aid of a sampled drum loop.

In most pop and rock music, a melody is usually stated the same way, or nearly the same way, each time it's repeated. One of the cool things about paying a melody in jazz is that, with all the customary stylistic syncopations, there's usually a lot of room for taking liberties with the rhythm and adding fills during any wide gaps between phrases. In the verse melody to "Detroit Rock City," there happens to be a big empty space between the first two phrases (two bars' worth, right after the opening line that corresponds to the lyrics "I feel uptight on a Saturday night"), so I might do something like this (FIGURE 1), playing the first phrase of the recognizable melody as single notes followed by a McCoy Tyner piano-style chord fill using quartal (stacked-fourths) voicings. When this part of the melody is repeated, I might do something different, like play the melody in strummed octaves, *à la* Wes, and alter it liberally with bluesy finger slides, like this (FIGURE 2). It all depends on the mood, the moment and what I did the previous time around.

## ARRANGING AND REHARMONIZING THE VERSE SECTION

THE NEXT CHALLENGE in adapting "Detroit Rock City" to the jazz idiom was to make the harmony sound stylistically appropriate, which entailed modifying and expanding some of the chords, which in the original Kiss arrangement of the song are basic root-fifth power chords (FIGURE 3) that imply major and minor triads within the context of the progression, and make them sevenths instead. The first thing I did was change the implied Cm and A<sup>o</sup> chords (C5 and A<sup>o</sup>5) to Cm7 and A<sup>o</sup>maj7 (FIGURE 4). I then decided to take some liberty with the progression itself and reharmonize the melody in one particular spot; instead of playing the original E<sup>o</sup>(5) and B<sup>o</sup>(5) chords, I thought it sounded cool and dramatic to substitute a minor ii<sup>o</sup>-V progression—Dm7<sup>o</sup>5 to G7<sup>o</sup>13—for these chords going back to the i chord, Cm, voicing each chord with the melody as



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note (see **DIAGRAM 1**). Since I am playing with bass accompaniment, which supplies the root notes, I feel I can sometimes get away with just playing the melody as single notes, as demonstrated in **FIGURE 1**, relying on the bass to help imply the harmony.

As is customary in a jazz arrangement, the melody of the song is played first, then the musicians take turns improvising over its chord progression. In our arrangement of "Detroit Rock City," there's a



bass solo section, during which I'm relieved from having to state the melody on top of the chords and can more freely "comp" (that's jazz slang for "accompany") using a variety of voicings, a few of which are illustrated in **DIAGRAM 2**. Another substitution I'll sometimes throw in is a simple Fsus4-F change (see **DIAGRAM 3**), played instead of Dm7b5 to G7b13. I'll usually alternate these two substitutions throughout the bass solo.

### SOLOING OPTIONS

**WHEN SOLOING OVER THIS** kind of chord progression and up-tempo groove, my objectives are to craft lines that have interesting, swinging contours and to tell an engaging musical story while managing to melodically describe and "paint" the implied chord qualities. Over the Cm7 chords in the verse section, I'll play angular lines based on the C Dorian mode (C D E $\flat$  F G A B $\flat$ ) like this (**FIGURE 5**). Over A $\flat$ maj7, I'll switch to C Aeolian (C D E $\flat$  F G A $\flat$  B $\flat$ ), which may also be viewed as A $\flat$  Lydian (A $\flat$  B $\flat$  C D E $\flat$  F G) and play lines like this (**FIGURE 6**).

The minor ii $^{\circ}$ -V-i progression—in

**FIGURE 6**

Abmaj7

**FIGURE 7**

Dm7b5      G7b13      Cm7

1

5

Abmaj7

9

Bb      Cm7

13

Abmaj7

17

Bb      Cm7

**FIGURE 8** "Detroit Rock City" chorus (Skolnick arrangement)

Gmaj7sus2      Abmaj7sus2      Bbmaj7sus2

hold chord

TAB



this case Dm7♭5 G7♭13 Cm7 — is always a lot of fun to improvise over because of the inherent harmonic tension, or “pull,” that it exudes. **FIGURE 7** is an example of what I might play over these three chords leading into the chorus progression (A♭ B♭ Cm). Notice on beats one and three of just about every bar how I deliberately target the chord tones, such as the thirds, sevenths and ninths (or flat ninths, as the case may be, depending on the chord and its harmonic function in the progression), and use scale tones as connecting passing tones. The appropriate scale to play over Dm7♭5 is D Locrian (D E♭ F G A♭ B♭ C), which is the seventh mode of the E♭ major scale (E♭ F G A♭ B♭ C D). A really cool scale to play over G7♭13 is G diminished

whole-tone (G A♭ B♭ C♭ D♭ E♭ F), which is the seventh mode of the A♭ melodic minor scale (A♭ B♭ C♭ D♭ E♭ F G) and is also known as the G super-Locrian mode.

## THE CHORUS

**FOR THE CHORUS SECTION** of the tune—the part behind the lyrics “Get up, everybody gonna move their feet...”—I follow the original root motion of the A♭(5) and B♭(5) chords while expanding upon their basic qualities with some hip, modern-sounding Steely Dan-style voicings, which are major sevenths with the second/ninth substituted for the third (see **FIGURE 8**). As Kiss did in their original arrangement, I approach the first chord (A-maj7sus2) from a half step

below (on “Get up”). These voicings are ideal here because they allow me to conveniently work the melody into the chords.

## PART-ONE WRAP-UP

**WHENEVER YOU’RE DOING** a jazz reinterpretation of a popular song like this, it helps, of course, to be somewhat familiar with the language and vocabulary of jazz and to already know some standard tunes from which you can draw ideas. If learning my arrangement of this song can help you with that, then that’s a good start.

To see how I approach the rest of “Detroit Rock City,” including the instrumental interlude section, see the video for Part 2 of this lesson at [guitarworld.com/skolnick](http://guitarworld.com/skolnick). For more information about the Alex Skolnick Trio, visit [alexskolnick.com](http://alexskolnick.com). You can also check out [myspace.com/alexskolnicktrio](http://myspace.com/alexskolnicktrio). Thanks for your support. ★

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# Sweeping

# UP

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100





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Buckethead

From Yngwie and Jason Becker to Buckethead and Ron "Bumblefoot" Thal, guitarists have made sweep picking a killer part of their repertoire. **GW** shows you fresh ways of applying it that can turbo-charge your rock guitar playing.

by **SHAUN BAXTER**

**S**WEEP PICKING IS AN important part of modern rock guitar playing and should be considered a staple of any rock guitarist's technical arsenal. Just as a violinist is expected to play across strings with a single stroke of the bow, so should guitar players be prepared to pick more than one note with a single pick stroke.

In rock, sweep picking has mainly been used by the so-called "neoclassical shredders"—players such as Yngwie Malmsteen and Jason Becker—to play one- and two-octave triad arpeggios. This approach is useful but well-documented, so here we're going to look at some alternative ways of

applying this technique in order to create fresh-sounding licks and lines.

To review, sweep picking means picking two or more notes with a single stroke. This can be done only when crossing from one string to another. Throughout the featured musical example in this lesson (**FIGURE 1**), wherever you see the same pick strokes used in succession, they must be part of one continuous stroke, or "sweep." To keep the notes distinct and prevent them from ringing, or "bleeding," into each other, it's imperative that your fret hand holds down only one note at a time as you cross from string to string. The goal is to make the notes sound evenly spaced and detached and not



like you're holding down and strumming a chord shape.

Some players find it easier to think of a sweep as a succession of classical-style "rest" strokes, in which every stroke follows through and comes to rest on the next string. In this way, it becomes easier to see how sweeping can also be done very slowly, not just quickly.

When down-sweeping, the pick should be angled (tilted slightly toward the floor); when up-sweeping, it should be held straight (perpendicular to the strings). This is because down-sweeps are a little more difficult than up-sweeps: angling the pick

when down-sweeping helps make the technique easier to perform. Ideally, you should grip the pick near the tip and show a very small amount of it to the string (about 2mm worth). Then, when sweeping, the fingers and thumb of the pick hand can serve as training wheels on a child's bike, allowing you to lean on the index fingernail during down-sweeps and on the side of the thumb during up-sweeps. This will also help to angle the pick in the optimal way. Realize that if you grip the pick far away from the tip, the change of angle between down-strokes and up-strokes will become too pronounced.

**Just as a violinist is expected to play across strings with a single stroke of the bow, so should guitar players be prepared to pick more than one note with a single pick stroke.**

As with most rock guitar playing techniques, the damping of idle open strings is also another important consideration. First, you should follow up behind each down-sweep with the side of the pick hand so that it rests, karate chop style, on all of the idle bass strings. Second, all of the idle treble strings should be muted by the underside of the fret-hand fingers. It's also possible to rest the back of the closed fingers of the pick hand on any idle treble strings, as additional insurance against these particular strings ringing out.

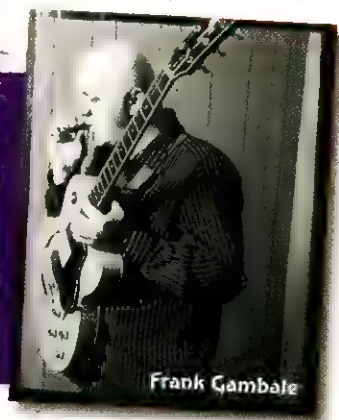
**FIGURE 1** is a musically appealing etude designed to demonstrate and help you master some very useful sweep-picking applications. The chord progression divides the piece into two eight-bar sections. The first section, bars 1–8, is based on the E Phrygian dominant mode (E F G# A B C D), which is the fifth mode of the A harmonic minor scale (A B C D E F G#), and is a scale commonly used by neoclassical shredders like Malmsteen and Tony MacAlpine. Phrygian dominant's intervallic structure is spelled 1 ♭2 3 4 5 ♭6 ♭7.

The second eight bar section (bars 9–16) is based on the A Aeolian, or, natural minor, scale (A B C D E F G), the intervallic spelling of which is 1 2 ♭3 4 5 ♭6 ♭7.

Once you've mastered the solo, try experimenting with sweep picking

## Track Record

FUSION PLAYER FRANK GAMBALE has explored and exploited the possibilities of sweep picking probably more than any other guitarist. Yes, he plays a mean arpeggio, but Frank also has lots other inventive licks and patterns, many of which are influenced by jazz saxophone players like Michael Brecker. Also, for a more rock-oriented approach, players like Ron Thal and Buckethead are renowned for artfully applying and incorporating sweep picking with other techniques, like tapping, to create a host of atonal and weird effects.



**FIGURE 1**



along to the extended backing track available at [guitarworld.com/sweep](http://guitarworld.com/sweep), in order to invent your own licks. Remember, as a general guiding principle, try to go for things that are as ear-catching as possible.

## Bars 1-4

**THE SOLO STARTS** with a series of repetitive-sounding licks based on various vertical (across the neck) shapes. The ear-catching elements here are the rhythmically interesting hemiola effect, as three-note ideas are played to a four-note count (16th notes), and the contrast between semitones and large intervals of a fifth or more.

## Bar 7

**THIS SECTION SEES** the introduction of some dissonant-sounding "blue" notes, namely the  $\flat 5$  (B $\flat$ ) and  $\flat 3$  (G $\flat$ ), which can also be viewed as the  $\sharp 9$ , to create a symmetrical pattern comprising consecutive minor-third intervals on each string. Again, extra interest is given to this dissonant series of notes by applying another "3 against 4" hemiola motif.

## Pro Tip

A VITAL PART OF APPLYING any new musical idea is to know how to finish it in a convincing, authoritative way. Consequently, when devising new sweep shapes, try preparing various effective ways of coming to rest at certain points within a pattern. Memorize a few of these good stopping points and resolutions so that you don't have to invent something on the spot when improvising.

## Bar 8

**HERE, THE PATTERN** established in bar 7 is applied across a series of strings, creating an even more dissonant effect. The introduction of the "non-scale" notes C $\sharp$  and F $\sharp$  are acceptable by the listener in this context, because there is a consistently repeating contour, making the resulting sequence of notes sound logical to the ear.

## Bar 9-11

**THIS SECTION IS** composed entirely of sus2 arpeggios that are diatonic to A Aeolian (the relative-minor key of C major). Suspended arpeggios (like sus2 and sus4) sound quite modern: their

characteristic sound comes from the fact that they contain no third intervals, just fifths, fourths and seconds. Interestingly, sus2 is an inversion of sus4 (they have the same notes, only in a different order, or "vertical stacking").

## Bar 12

**AT THE END OF THIS BAR**, a descending eighth-note triplet pattern is played along to the "stabs" by the band. It's a vertical pattern that is shown to be executed using consecutive upstrokes. When played quickly, these would all be played as one continuous upstroke. However, at slow tempos (as in this example) these strokes would be best performed separately, as this will help with both your tone and timing.

## Bars 13 and 14

**THIS PASSAGE BEGINS** with a series of consecutive quintuplets—five notes played evenly within the space of one beat—followed by some more suspended arpeggios. Note that the final arpeggio includes an ear-catching semi-tone interval between the E and B strings before finishing on an emphatic E note that's adorned with some finger vibrato.

(0:25)

**9 A Aeolian**

**11 loco**

**14 loco w/bar**



# SHRED ALERT

## USING POSITION SHIFTS TO YOUR ADVANTAGE WHEN SOLOING



I'd like to address the dodgy subject of "position shifting." A great way to jump into this topic is to use as our basis one of the most commonly used scales


When this scale is played in fifth position, the highest note is C (first string, eighth fret) and the lowest note is A (sixth string, fifth fret), and you are stuck within the limitations of those boundaries. Position shifts open those boundaries, allowing us to play this scale from the absolute lowest note possible, the open low E, to one of the highest notes possible on a guitar, the D on the first string's 22nd fret.

The next note is the key to this exercise: using the open high E string to sound the next note in the scale, I am afforded the opportunity to shift all the way up to 17th position and continue playing the rest of the scale.

Making that position shift sound seamless can be a little tricky, so it's a good idea to break the phrase up into smaller pieces, as shown in **FIGURE 3**. Begin by looping the first six notes of the scale with the position shift. Once that begins to feel comfortable, add a few more notes and continue to do so until the entire phrase feels comfortable and seamless. Familiarizing yourself with an expanded note register like this will afford you a range that is normally exclusive to keyboard players.

The last position-shifting lick this month is shown in **FIGURE 5**. This one

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DISC**


Hopefully these exercises will help you to get a handle on position shifting, and I do hope you have fun playing minor pentatonic scales with your pinkie only. 

**TAB**

8 5 8 5 7 5 7 5 7 5 8 5

5 7 0 17 19 17 19 17 20 17 20

[illegible]

TAB 

	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	etc
index	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	etc
middle	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	etc
ring	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	etc
pinkie	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	etc

**TAB**  $\frac{4}{4}$

The first system of guitar tablature is for the first four measures of the song. It is written in 4/4 time. The first measure contains the notes 10, 12, 12, 15, with a slur over the last three notes. The second measure contains the notes 12, 14, with a slur over the two notes. The third and fourth measures are represented by slashes, indicating that the notes are not written out. Below the first two measures, there are two horizontal lines with the numbers 1, 3, 1, 4, 1, 3 written underneath them, with a slur over the last three notes. This indicates a specific fingering for the first two measures.

10 12 12 15 12 14

1 3 1 4 1 3

# THE SINGLE-STRING MAGISTERIUM

LEARNING SCALE PATTERNS, ONE STRING AT A TIME



**THIS MONTH WE'RE GOING** to return to the idea of using a single string not only as a way to learn major and pentatonic scale formations, but also to lay the foundation of chordal structure.

Due to the manner in which the guitar is tuned—in perfect fourths, except for the second and third strings, B and G, which are tuned a major third apart—whenever you play a scale using more than one string, some of the intervals in the scale formula become invisible as you cross strings.

The only way to see the complete, unbroken formula for a scale pattern is to play it on a single string. Since the major scale contains seven arithmetic modes, and there are 12 keys, learning the major scale thoroughly yields an understanding of 84 regular scales, in all the modes, both major and minor. The pentatonic scale, whether major or minor, is a five-note scale. Of necessity, it must contain five modes, starting from each of the five notes; since there are 12 keys, learning the pentatonic scale thoroughly yields knowledge of 60 pentatonic scales. Thus, learning the 84 major scales and the 60 pentatonic scales yields knowledge of a staggering 144 regular scales.

In actuality, however, you need to

learn just two scales: the major scale and the major pentatonic scale. All the other scales can be derived from these.

To review, the formula for the major scale is whole step, whole step, half step, whole step, whole step, whole step, half step—or W W H W W W H—and this pattern continues infinitely in successive octaves. This is spelled, intervallically, 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 1. The natural minor scale is the Aeolian mode, which starts from the sixth degree of the major scale and gives you 6 7 1 2 3 4 5 6 (W H W W H W W).

**FIGURE 1** shows all seven modes of the major scale up and down a single string, with each mode starting at the first fret. I've indicated the scale degrees as they relate to each mode's relative major scale.

The formula for a major pentatonic scale is W W m3 W m3 and is spelled, intervallically, 1 2 3 5 6 1. The relative minor pentatonic scale starts from the sixth degree of major pentatonic: 6 1 2 3 5 6 (m3 W W m3 W). **FIGURE 2** shows the pentatonic scale and each of its modes played up and down a single string.

Both scales are diatonic—each is comprised of just two types of intervals. The major scale contains only whole steps and half steps, and the pentatonic scale has only whole steps and minor thirds.

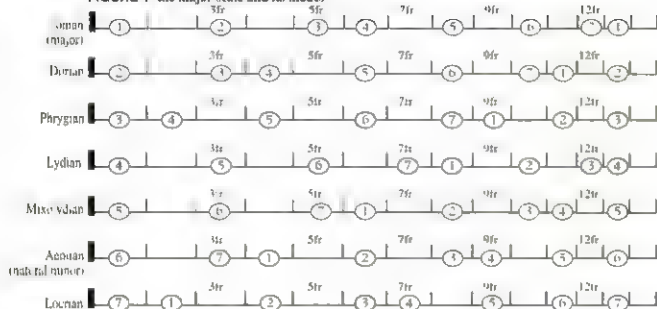
Chords also feature just two types of intervals, major and minor thirds, which

are stacked atop one another. Triads are made up of three notes: the tonic (a.k.a. the root), the third, which can be major or minor, and the fifth, which can be perfect, diminished or augmented. Each combination of these interval types yields a different triad quality, of which there are four possible ones, all of which are illustrated on a single string in **FIGURE 3**. They are, in order shown, major, minor (b3), diminished (b3 and b5) and augmented (#5).

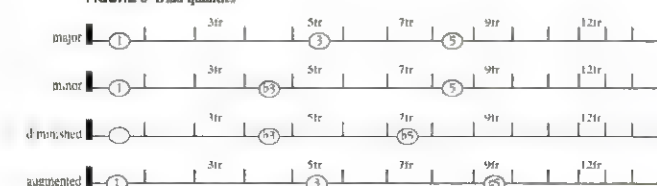
Now let's look at seventh chords, which are the four-note chords made up of the odd scale degrees within one octave. **FIGURE 4** shows the five most common seventh chord qualities.

To practice this study, I advocate using only one finger and sliding it up and down any given string following each formula. To learn all the regular scales and most commonly used chord qualities, you need to know only four intervals: half steps, whole steps, minor thirds and major thirds. Playing them on a single string is the only way to avoid the invisibility of intervals and gain a complete grasp of this concept. Remember that many famous players spent some time learning on a single string: Jimi Hendrix, Muddy Waters, Buddy Guy, John Lee Hooker, Magic Sam... The list goes on. Let it include you. □

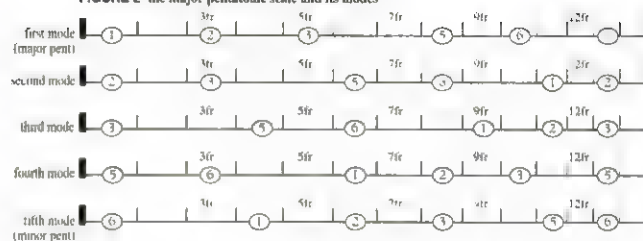
**FIGURE 1** the major scale and its modes



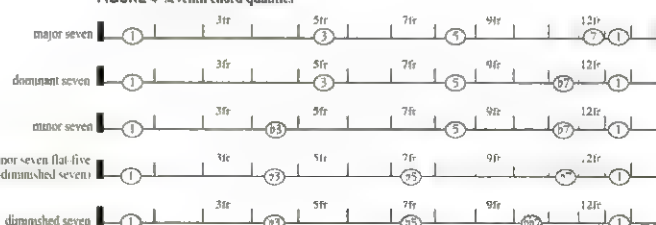
**FIGURE 3** triad qualities



**FIGURE 2** the major pentatonic scale and its modes



**FIGURE 4** seventh chord qualities





## ODDS OR EVENS

INCORPORATING ODD METER INTO HEAVY RIFFS



IN THIS MONTH'S LESSON, I'd like to address the subject of songwriting, specifically the incorporation of odd meter within the context of heavy riffs. A good example of a heavy riff played in an odd meter is the main riff from my song "Hands Without Shadows," which is from the album of the same name.

I developed this riff using a favorite method of mine, by playing for a long stretch of time while recording what I play either onto a tape recorder (such as an old cassette player, which I still occasionally use) or a digital recorder. After playing for a while, I'll listen back to the recording and zero-in on the parts that I feel I can elaborate on. On occasion, this method has resulted in my writing 50 to 60 percent of a song within a single jam session.

**FIGURE 1** depicts the "Hands Without Shadows" main riff. The riff is in the key of F# minor and is made up of three bars of 4/4 and one bar of 3/4. You can also interpret it as 15 "counts," meaning, when you add up all of the quarter notes, you get a total of 15. When I came up with this riff, it was not my intent to write something that was played in an odd meter; I just heard the riff that way, and it wasn't until I tried to analyze it (and teach it to a drummer) that I discovered what the odd meter really was.

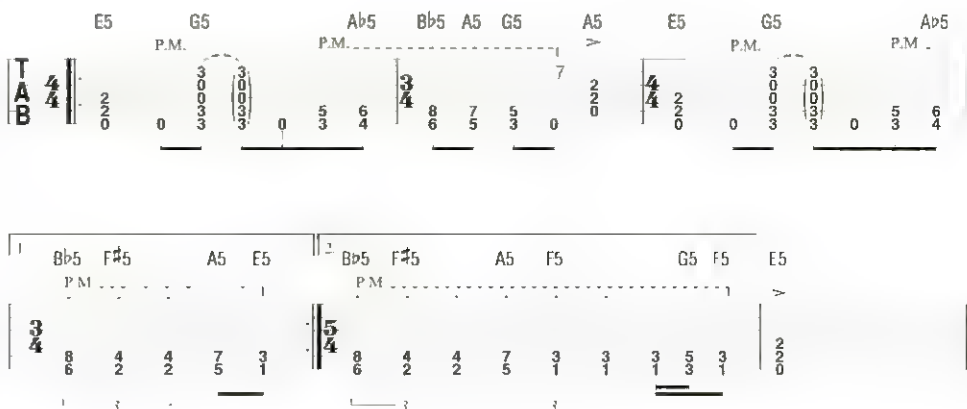
The riff is based on a repeating pattern played on the sixth string, wherein I hammer on from the open low E to F# at the second fret, play two more eighth notes of F# and then jump up to two different notes on the fourth string: I first play an F# one octave higher, and then I play the #7 ("flatted seventh"), E. In bar 3, I follow the E-F# hammer-on and subsequent eighth notes with the #5 ("flatted fifth"), C, which I sound with an artificial "pinch" harmonic (P.H.), getting a little bit of the edge of the pick-hand thumb into the pick attack. Those first three bars set up the "question" part of the phrase, and the "answer" is found in bar 4, which is the bar of 3/4, wherein I move between the fourth and fifth frets on the low E and A strings. This riff is then repeated with a slight variation as I switch to straight F# 16th notes on beat four of bars 1 and 2.

Tuned down one half step (low to high: E♭ A♭ D♭ G♭ B♭ E♭).

**FIGURE 1** "Hands Without Shadows" main riff



**FIGURE 2** "I Do for You" main riff



When playing this riff, be aware of the value of using palm-muting (P.M.), which is executed by lightly laying the edge of the pick hand's palm across the bridge saddles. I palm mute just about all of the notes in **FIGURE 1**, with the exception of the notes on the D and A strings in bars 1-3.

As you may have already discovered, F# minor is a great key on the guitar for many reasons. It's nice and low on the neck and enables the use of open strings without actually being in "open," or first, position. The open low E sounds a #7, which, within the rock and metal genre, sounds nice and heavy, and it's easy to jump up to an octave higher and still have lots of room even higher up the fretboard.

The main riff from my song "I Do for You," from *2 X Again*, is another good

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example of how I use odd meter. This riff, shown in **FIGURE 2**, is made up of power chords, played mostly on the bottom two strings. Through the first six bars, I alternate between bars of 4/4 and 3/4. You can also think of this as two consecutive bars of 7/4. Bar 7 is a restatement of bar 1 and is followed by a bar of 5/4. These two bars may also be reckoned as a single bar of 9/4. What makes this riff even more twisted is the incorporation of quarter-note triplets in both the 3/4 and 5/4 bars.

Try writing some odd meter riffs of your own. It's as simple as coming up with an idea and then devising a few different ways to end the riff, by either adding a few extra notes or cutting off a few. Before you know it, you'll have created an odd meter riff that sounds good to your ears. □

# LAST WILL & TESTAMENT

SIGNING OFF WITH A FAST PICKING IDEA AND A \$350 WARM-UP EXERCISE



I'M WRITING THIS MONTH'S column from home, in between tours with Testament. We have a couple of months off before we head out on the road again. For our next tour, we'll be in Europe with Judas Priest and Megadeth on the Priest Feast tour, something we're really looking forward to. During our brief autumn break we're going to start working on new material for our next album, which we'd like to begin recording before the end of '09. I've also got a signature Dean Flying V guitar coming out in January. I designed some of the artwork for the body, and it's pretty metal looking, so I'm really excited about that, too.

For my last column, I'd like to talk about something that is incredibly important but also often overlooked: stretching exercises. Previously, I've talked about warming up before you play, but I didn't talk about stretching. It's very important, because when you play the kind of fast music Testament does, your hands can cramp up if you're not properly warmed up, and you can develop tendonitis, also known as "tennis elbow." Both of these conditions are painful, and if you get either, you probably won't be able to play guitar for a while. And the last thing you want is for your band mates to have to get another guitar player to replace you for gigs.

That said, before a Testament gig, I like to do some physical stretches in addition to playing exercises. One of these is a four-step process:

**Step 1:** Stretch both arms out straight in front of you, with your palms facing up toward the ceiling. Make a fist with each hand, and bend your wrists upward and toward you, as far as you can, and hold that position for 10 seconds.

**Step 2:** Bring your hands back down, open your fists and bend your wrists downward as far as you can, so your fingers are pointing toward the floor. Hold that position for 10 seconds.

**Step 3:** Leave your wrists bent backward, but bend your elbows upward so that your fingers end up horizontal and your palms face the ceiling. The pose should look as if you're "holding up the pyramids" like in one of those old Egyptian drawings, or carrying a tray of food like a waiter. Again, hold that



**IF YOU'RE NOT PROPERLY WARMED UP, YOUR HANDS CAN CRAMP UP AND YOU CAN DEVELOP TENDONITIS. IF YOU GET EITHER, YOU PROBABLY WON'T BE ABLE TO PLAY GUITAR FOR A WHILE.**

position for 10 seconds.

**Step 4:** Shake out your arms and hands, and relax.

You can see me demonstrate this exercise on the CD-ROM that comes with this month's issue.

Performing this four-step process before you play will help to stretch your muscles. It's a little like getting a hydrocortisone shot: it's really effective, especially if you're cold or don't have much time to practice before you go onstage.

I'd love to tell you I came up with this stretching routine myself, but the truth is this lesson cost me \$350. A while back, I started to get a tingling feeling from my elbow down, and it got to the point where it would be physically painful to do a hammer-on or a wide stretch. I went to the doctor and described my symptoms, and he sent me to a therapist. I was signed up for six sessions, but as soon as I got the bill for the first 45-minute session I stopped going, because it was so expensive. But that \$350 exercise stuck with me, and it works, so I'm giving it to you for free.

The other thought I'm going to leave you with is a fast-picking technique that I had no idea I was doing until someone pointed it out. When picking fast, many guitarists tend to play from the wrist, but I've found that I can pick even faster and with less effort by mak-

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ing a rotating motion with my thumb and index finger. This is a personal thing that might not work for everybody, but it's worth trying. Once again, this is way easier to explain visually, so check out the CD-ROM footage to see exactly what I'm talking about here.

This is my last column for now, and I'm going to sign-off by answering another one of your questions:

Hi Eric,

Your tone on the new Testament album is killer, and so is your live sound. What equipment did you use in the studio, and is it different from your live rig? Great column too!

-- John Lewis,  
Hoboken, NJ

Thanks. I've been searching for that tone for a while, and by accident I stumbled onto the new EVH 5150III head and ended up using it to record *The Formation of Damnation*. In my opinion, the amp has all the tonal characteristics of Eddie's sound on the first Van Halen record: a nice top end, plus endless presence and gain. Live, I'm using the new Marshall JVM head because it has those same characteristics I love in an amp: sharp top with a bite, plus a decent clean tone. I use the two-channel version of the head, because it gives me exactly what I want: good clean and crunch tones, plus a lead boost for soloing. I suggest using Celestion Vintage 30 speakers or even 25-watt Greenbacks. Celestion Greenback speakers have an awesome tone, but be careful with them. If you're only using a single 4x12 cab with a 100-watt head, they're easy to blow up.

Let me finish by saying it's been a blast writing this column. I expected to write only three or four of them, but it's gone well past eight. Many thanks to *Guitar World* for the opportunity, and also to associate editor Nick Bowcott for his invaluable help. As I said from the outset, my intent with this column was to discuss some points that I thought would appeal to the intermediate player. But judging by some of the emails and letters I've received, it looks as if this column has helped some advanced players too, and that's really flattering. Thanks for reading. I hope to return for another run after we finish our next record. □



# SOLITARY MAN

## BASIC HOME-RECORDING TIPS

**ON  
DISC**


MUCH OF MY FOCUS in this *Guitar World* instructional column has been on guitar techniques and writing approaches. This month, however, I'd like to take a little

detour and talk about some tips and tools for arranging basic riffs within the context of a song, particularly in regard to home recording.

As guitarists, we tend to be away from our band when we come up with a great riff. There are routines and tools that make working alone much more enjoyable and productive.

I have a lot of experience writing songs in seclusion, so I'll start by describing how I typically approach a new song. While the following explanation requires a basic knowledge of recording within a digital audio workstation, or DAW, don't be discouraged if you're not yet as fluent with home recording as you'd like to be. I can tell you that I used the very same process described here when writing the material for Emperor's *IX Equilibrium* album, only I was using a pen and paper and had a Dictaphone held close to my guitar strings!

For this month's example, I've made a custom template in my DAW with the following tracks:

- 3 mono tracks for left, right and center guitar parts
- 1 stereo track for effects guitar
- 4 mono tracks for the D.I. (direct injection) signal (more on this later)
- 3 MIDI tracks set up for guitar tab layout
- 1 MIDI piano track for arrangement ideas or additional melodies
- 1 MIDI drum track for programmed drums

Here's the process: First, I choose an amp simulator and set all the audio tracks so they are ready to record. After finding a suitable tempo, I record the main riff, usually on the left and right tracks (sometimes with slight variations). Then I begin working on a second guitar part for the center. Next, I program a rough drum sketch to hear if things are rocking as hard as they should. If I'm satisfied with the drums, I get on with programming all the guitar parts on the corresponding tab MIDI tracks. Unless I have immediate ideas for effects guitars, I'll move on to the next

FIGURE 1 "Scarab" main riff (0:02)

N.C. (G#m)  
(w. dist.)

P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M.

1  
T  
A  
B  
4/4

3 4 1 2 1 2 1 1 3 4 1 2 4 2 4 2 1 2 3 4 1 2 1 2 1 1 3 4 1 2 4 2 4 2 1 3

5 P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M.

(3) 4 1 2 1 2 1 1 3 4 1 2 4 2 4 2 1 2 3 4 1 2 1 2 1 1 3

riff idea. Sometimes one riff may inspire a second riff, or I'll store the idea for later use.

So what are the benefits from working in this manner? The first, and obvious, reason is that it lets you capture your musical ideas. I've lost many great riffs and melodies thinking, Oh, I'll remember this next Saturday when we're rehearsing. Plus, it's always good to have riffs on hand, because you may find the perfect spot for it at some point in the future.

Second, by tabbing the riff, you have a record of exactly how you played it, so when you return to the riff in the future, you won't have to figure out how you played it. You also sharpen your scoring skills and knowledge of note values, and if you have a second guitar player in your band, that person can learn his or her parts from the tablature you create. Furthermore, if you tab the music in a DAW or score program, you can easily use that MIDI information to try out arrangements for other instruments. And finally, recording your songs in a DAW with programmed drums also provides a great demo to illustrate your idea to your band or potential session musicians.

About the D.I. tracks I mentioned earlier: when recording demo guitars, I always cut two tracks: one with amp simulation for a real-time feel of how the part will sound, and one using the direct signal in case I happen to phrase something in a special way, or accidentally hit some harmonics that would be hard to recreate. This way, I have

**IHSAHN** a founding member of black metal band Emperor and teaches guitar to budding metalheads in his hometown of Notodden, Norway. His new solo album, *angL*, was released in May 2008 on Candlelight Records. For more information, check out [www.mnemosyne.no/news](http://www.mnemosyne.no/news)

the option of running this untreated D.I. signal through a real amp later on when I cut the real guitar recordings.

I've been working like this for many years now. In fact, on my recent solo album, *angL*, I recorded all the songs as described above and then sent demo versions off to my session drummer, Asgeir Mickelson, and session bassist, Lars Norberg. For Lars, I imported my MIDI tabs into a score program and sent him PDFs of all the notes. Long story short: files were swapped, an album was made, and I'm still looking forward to actually meeting Lars in person. That's technology for you!

But let there be no lesson without a riff! Here is the opening part from a song called "Scarab," off *angL* (FIGURE 1). It's a rather straightforward riff, but if you listen to the audio recording on this month's CD-ROM, you'll hear that I used the MIDI programmed tabs to trigger harpsichord samples in unison with the guitars to give the sound a baroque feel. Also, the backward sound at the intro and the pick glide effects at the end are D.I. signals from the initial demos that made it through to the final result.

While not all of this may be useful to you right now, hopefully it will help you get one step closer to preserving your ideas more efficiently. You can't document your riffs with a pen and a napkin forever! See you next month, and make sure to bring your guitar.

To see an illustration of Ihsahn's DAW template, go to [guitarworld.com/leftandpath](http://guitarworld.com/leftandpath). □

# BLUES MATRIX

APPLYING "CONSTANT-STRUCTURE" CHORD QUALITIES ACROSS THE 12-BAR BLUES FORM

ON  
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THIS MONTH I'D LIKE TO show you a neat musical concept and some exercises that use the familiar structure of the 12-bar blues form as a framework upon which to focus on one

specific type of chord and give yourself lots of practice improvising with it. I call this concept the "blues matrix," and it involves substituting and applying the same chord quality across the entire progression. For example, if I want to work on soloing over major seventh chords, I can create a modified blues progression in which every chord in the progression is a major seventh. I could do the same thing with any other chord quality, such as minor seven or minor seven flat-five.

The concept is to use what's known as "constant structure harmony," which, strictly defined, means parallel motion chord to chord. For our purposes, we'll relax this definition and just use the same basic type of chord with various voicings that lay conveniently in the middle area of the fretboard.

Instead of applying this concept to a basic I-IV-V blues, we're going to make things a little more interesting and start out with a 12-bar progression that has some built-in root motion substitutions throughout, using some of the subs I've shown you in the last three columns. We'll begin with dominant-seven chord types, which includes sevenths, ninths and 13ths, as this is the chord quality that's most associated with the traditional blues form. **FIGURE 1** is an example of some comping over a modified 12-bar progression in the key of F using dominant-seven chord types exclusively. The figure is played at a relaxed, medium tempo with a Latin-flavored straight (even)-eighths feel. To add some melodic appeal, I've thrown in a few chromatic passing chords, specifically the A13 at the end of bar 4 and the B13 in bars 5 and 9.

In **FIGURE 2**, I'm using major-seven chord types exclusively, with some sus2 and 6/9 color tones added to a few of the chords. Notice that the basic root motion, however, is the same as **FIGURE 1**. In **FIGURE 3**, we're applying minor-seven chord types to progression, which have a darker, moodier flavor.

On this month's CD-ROM, I improvise some solo lines over these three progressions (identified as **FIGURES 4-6**). Go to [guitarworld.com/juris](http://guitarworld.com/juris) to see these figures transcribed. □

**FIGURE 1** dominant-seven chord types

Moderately ♩ = 124

**FIGURE 2** major-seven chord types

**FIGURE 3** minor-seven chord types



## WALKING BY MYSELF

HOW TO SOUND LIKE A ONE-MAN BAND

ON  
DISC

## DEVELOPING A VOCABULARY

of classic blues rhythms and phrases will help to make you a better blues guitarist. But in order to become a better musician, you also need to know what the rest of the band is doing around you. This will not only make you a more effective all-around player—it will also enable you to become a musical army of one. In this month's column, we're going to look at ways in which you can incorporate the sound and feel of bass, piano and horns into your guitar playing.

First, the bass: the traditional bass shuffle pattern is called a walking line, which is comprised of a combination of chord tones (arpeggios) and scalar passing tones played in a quarter-note rhythm matching that of the bass drum. (FIGURE 1 shows a typical walking line for a medium-tempo 12-bar blues in the key of G.) To capture an old-school acoustic bass feel on the electric guitar, mute the strings adjacent to each note with your fret-hand fingers and slap the strings with the pick for a percussive effect. The notes are deliberately arranged along the lowest strings to capture a more bass-like sound.

The classic blues piano shuffle pattern doubles the walking line in the left hand while the right hand plays a chord on each upbeat. You can simulate a piano-style rhythm by adding upstrokes between the notes of the walking line while muting the strings with your fret hand, as demonstrated in FIGURE 2. Despite the absence of pitch on the upbeats, the percussive effect evokes the shuffle feel. It doesn't matter which particular strings you hit, as long as the feel is consistent.

Horn sections, a staple of classic blues arrangements, are generally employed to play riffs, or syncopated phrases that add color to the rhythm section. FIGURE 3 is a stock horn-style riff, and vintage blues recordings display countless variations that you can adapt to the guitar. Sliding into the chords from a half step in either direction adds a little grease to the phrasing.

The real fun begins when you weave bass-, piano- and horn-style rhythms together to create the illusion of a whole band. FIGURE 4 is an example of this. The secret is to play just enough of each part to create the impression that it contin-

FIGURE 1 Medium Shuffle



FIGURE 2 Medium Shuffle



FIGURE 3 Medium Shuffle

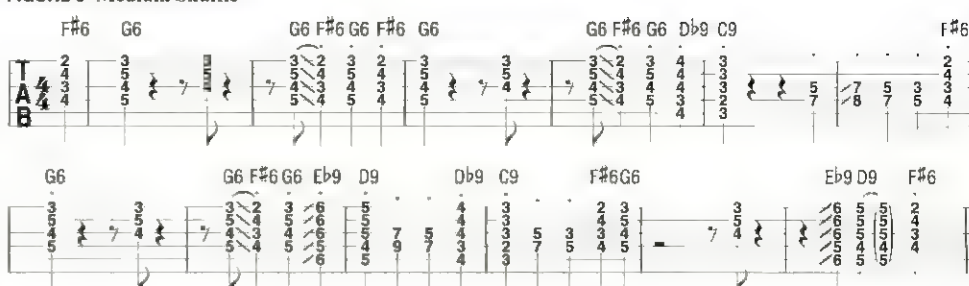
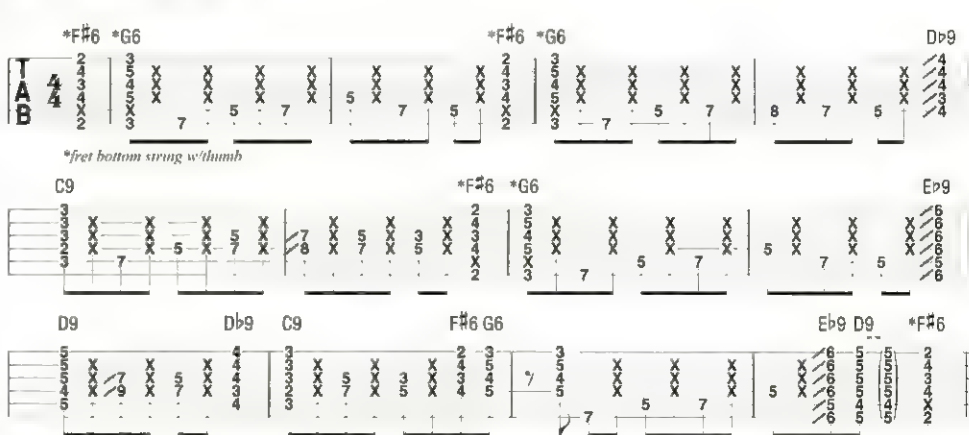


FIGURE 4 Medium Shuffle



ues on as you grab a bit of another. Use your thumb to fret the roots on the sixth string, freeing up your fingers to hold down the chords, and maintain a loose,

**KEITH WYATT** teaches blues guitar at the Musicians Institute. He performs with the Blasters.

swinging pick hand. When you develop the musical independence of a one-man band, you sound that much better with the band. **R**

**ON  
DISC**

Gerry is a stunning player, but unfortunately he never got the recognition that I think he deserved. He was the first guy I ever saw that used a thumb pick, which, still to this day, is the way I prefer to play. I soon discovered that Chet Atkins also played with a thumb pick. Gerry was doing a lot of stuff along the lines of **FIGURE 2**, wherein a thumb-

**TAB**  $\frac{4}{4}$  | 0 | (0) 0 4 4 | 2 2 - 4 4 | 5 5 - 4 - 4 - 2 - 2 | 3 4 | 2 | 0 0 4 - 4 | 2 2 4 4 | 5 5 4 4 2 2 | 3 4 | 2 | 0

**TAB**  $\frac{4}{4}$

5 5 5 5 | 5 5 5 5 | 5 5 5 5 | 5 5 5 5 |

TAB  $\frac{4}{4}$  4 5 4 (4) 5 (5) 5 5 (5) 4 5 4 (4) 5 4 (4) 2 4 2 7 1 2 7 2 2

Those are all my primary early influences, but I picked up all kinds of things from many other players, like Jimi Hendrix and Jeff Beck, as well as many lesser-known guitarists. If I hear something that sounds great to me, I'll "borrow" it, which usually inspires a spark of creativity and leads me to inverting the riff and finding different shapes and applications for it. A good guitarist should always keep his or her ears open because there are so many great players and great licks out there to be discovered. 



# The Pedals That Make The Tone



Here are the tones for this month's songs. Use the pedals with level settings as shown, and chained in this order.

## "Trapped Under Ice" - Metallica



**MT-2**



**PW-10**

## "Shout It Out Loud" - Kiss



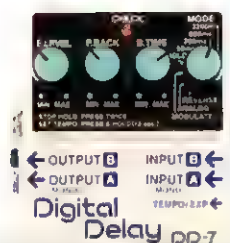
**OS-2**

## "Carry On Wayward Son" - Kansas



**DS-2**

## "Blooddrunk" - Children Of Bodom



**DD-7**



**ML-2**

## "Beat It" - Michael Jackson



**RV-5**



**MD-2**

For 30 years, BOSS has been the world leader in innovative guitar and bass effects pedals, multi-effects, rhythm machines, personal digital studios and more. With their unmistakable killer tone, BOSS pedals continue to define the sound of today's rock music.

For more in-depth tips, including which pedals to use for which sections, visit [www.BossUS.com/tones](http://www.BossUS.com/tones).



All references to specific artists and songs are strictly for comparison purposes. The artists referenced herein do not sponsor or endorse BOSS pedals or Roland, and are not affiliated with BOSS or Roland in any way. BOSS and Roland make no representation regarding the actual equipment used by the various artists to achieve their distinct sounds.

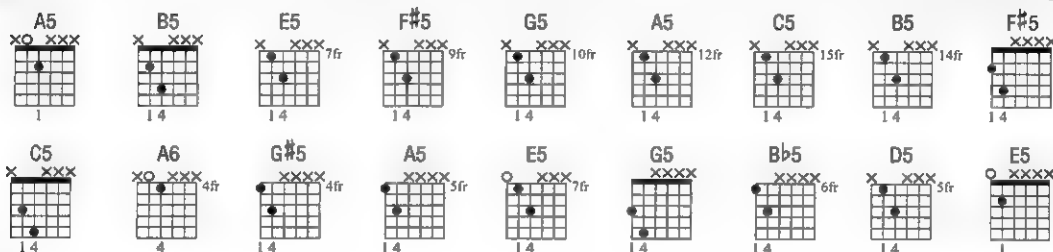
Pedal settings by Paul Hanson, BOSS Product Specialist and author of the top-selling book "Shred Guitar" from Alfred Publishing.



## "TRAPPED UNDER ICE" METALLICA

As heard on **RIDE THE LIGHTNING** (ELEKTRA)

Words and Music by **James Hetfield, Lars Ulrich and Kirk Hammett** \* Transcribed by **Jeff Perrin**



### A Intro (0:00)

Moderately ♩ = 124

N.C.(E5) D5 E5 (E5) G5 A5 (B5) B5

Gtrs. 1 and 2 (elec. w/dist.)

1 P.M. --- P.M. --- P.M. ---

Gtr. 3 (elec. w/dist.)

Bass

### B (0:09)

(w/double-time feel)

(E5) D5 E5 D5 E5 D5 F5

Gtrs. 1 and 2

Rhy. Fig. 1

(play 4 times)

5 P.M. --- P.M. ---

Bass

Bass Fig. 1

(play 4 times)

E5 F#5 G5  
Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 1 four times (see bar 5)

1. A5 C5 B5 2. A5

Gtr. 3 (doubled)

Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 four times (see bar 5)



## C 1st Guitar Solo (0.33)

**F#5** C5 B5 A6 B5

Gtr. 3(w/wah)

Gtrs. 1 and 2  
Rhy. Fig. 2  
P.M.

Bass  
Bass Fig. 2

**F#5** C5 B5 A6 B5

Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 2 twice (see bar 12)

Gtr. 3

Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 twice (see bar 12)

**F#5** C5 B5 A6 B5

**F#5** B5

Gtr. 3

Gtrs. 1 and 2  
P.M.

Bass

N.H. w/bar

pitch. E

## D Verses (0.45, 1:21, 3:06)

1. I don't know how to live through this hell
2. Crystallized as I lay here and rest
3. No release from my cryonic state

Woken up I'm still locked in this shell  
Eyes of glass stare directly at death  
What is this I've been stricken by fate

**F#5** C5 B5 A6 B5 F#5 C5 B5 A6 B5

Gtrs. 1 and 2  
P.M.

Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 four times (see bar 12)

(repeat previous two bars)

# "TRAPPED UNDER ICE"

the Boss that  
Make The Tone  
www.BossUS.com tone

Frozen soul frozen down to the core  
From deep sleep I have broken away the core  
Wrapped up tight cannot move can't break free

Break the ice I can't take anymore  
No one knows no one hears what I say  
Hand of doom has a tight grip on me

24 2 2

F#5 C5 B5 A6 B5 F#5 C5 B5 A6 B5

## E Chorus (0:57, 1:32, 3:18)

Freezing can't move at all Screaming can't hear my call  
G#5 A5 G#5 A5 E5 G#5 A5 (E5) A5

28 Gtrs. 1 and 2 P.M. P.M. P.M.

Bass

\*repeat previous beat

4th time, skip ahead to [K] 2nd time, skip ahead to [G] 3rd time, go back to [E] Chorus

F#5 G5 I am dying to live Cry out I'm trapped under ice  
F#5 G5 (E5) G5 G#5 A5 Bb5 A5

Gtrs. 1 and 2 substitute Rhy. Fill 1 third time (see below)

32 P.M. P.M.

Bass substitutes Bass. Fill 1 third time (see below)

## F 2nd Guitar Solo (1:09)

F#5 C5 B5 A6 B5 F#5

Gtr. 3 Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 2 four times (see bar 12)

36 w/bar N.H. "scoop" w/bar wide vib. w/bar

pitch: B

\*Depress bar prior to picking note

Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 four times (see bar 12)

39 C5 B5 A6 B5 F#5

41 C5 B5 A6 B5 F#5

go back to [D] 2nd Verse C5 B5 A6 B5

Rhy. Fill 1 (3:28)

A5 Bb5 A5 go back to [E] Chorus

Gtrs. 1 and 2

Bass Fill 1 (3:28)

(A5) (Bb5) (A5) go back to [E] Chorus



**G** (1:44)

(end double-time feel)

A5 B15

A5 Bb5

G5

A5

F5

P.M

44 Gtrs. 1 and 2

[illegible]

## **H Interlude (1:49)**

(E5)

G5

(E)

E5

D5

(Bb5)

47 P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M.

Bass Fig. 3

end Bass Fig.

**I Bridge (2:00)**

(3rd and 4th times)

Scream) from my

**SOU**

**(Fate)**

**mystified**

(Hell)

**for evermore**

E5

D5

C5

**B5**

E5

(play 4 times)

[illegible]

(E5)

G5

(E)

E5

D5

(Bb5)

(play 4 times)

55 P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M.

Bass plays Bass Fig. 3 four times (see bar 47)

Gtrs. 1 and 2

(A5)

N.C.

Gtr. 3

[illegible]

# The Pedals That Make The Tone

## F#5

*Gtrs. 1 and 2 plus Rhy. Fig. 2 four times (see bar 12)*

Gtr. 3

C5 B5 A6 B5

Gr. 5

64 19 17 14 19 17 14 17 14 19 17 14 19 17 14 17 14 19 17 14 19 17 14 17 14 19 0 18 14

*Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 four times (see bar 12)*

F#5

C5 B5 A6 B5

[illegible]

F#5

C5      B5      A6      B5

68

F#5

C5      B5      A6      B5  
(hold note  
throughout  
next bar)

70

16 16 18 (18) 16 18 19 (19) 17 (17) 19 21 17 19 21 (21) (21)

new entry

**trapped under ice** (*1st time only*)

A5 Bb5

A5

\_\_\_\_\_

Bb5

A5

Bb5

**G5**

A5

Gtrs. 1 and 2

*(play 3 times)*

P.M.

*(play 3 times)*

72

Gus. 1 and 2

P.M. (play 3 times)

Bass

(play 3 times)

## F#5

Gtrs. 1 and 2

C5 B5 A6 B5

(play 3 times)

75 P.M. P.M. P.M. (play 3 times)

*Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 three times (see bar 12)*

F#5

B5

F#5

grad  
slide

Gtrs. 1 and 2

P.M

P.M

PM

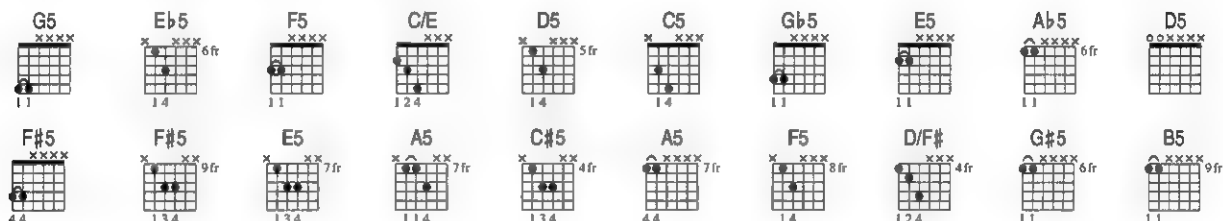
[illegible]



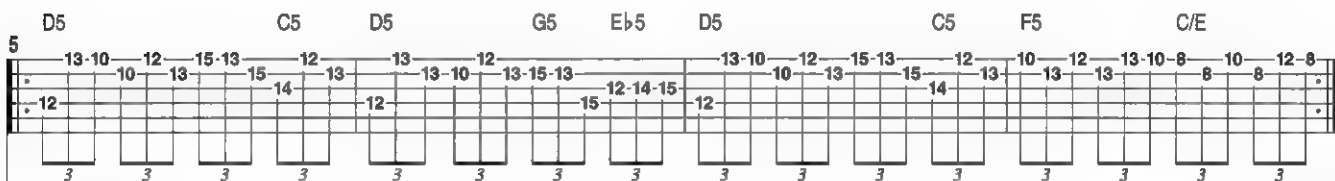
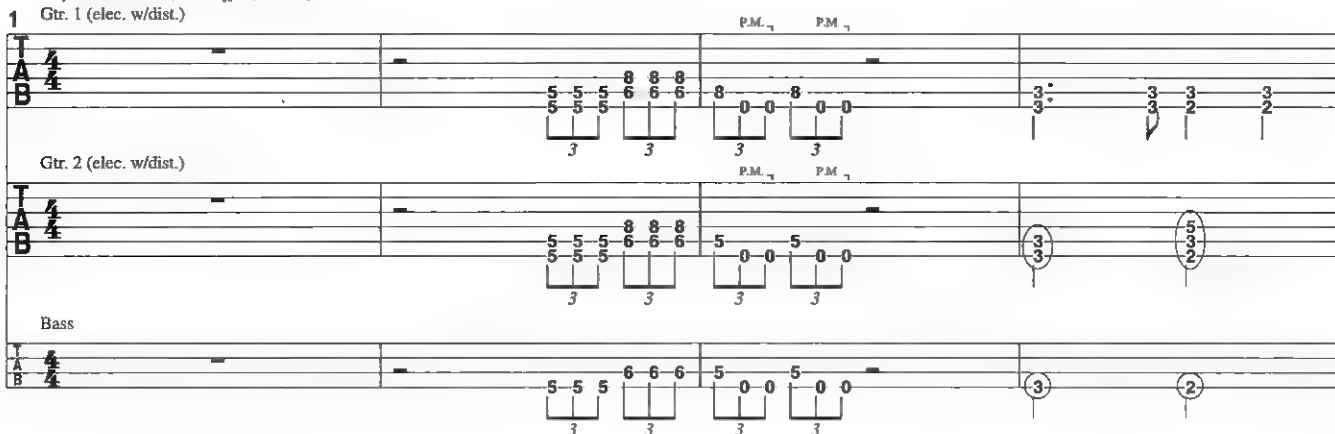


*Words and Music by Alexi Laiho \* Transcribed by Jeff Perrin*

*All music sounds one whole step lower than written.*



## C/E



The musical score for 'The Rose Tree' is written on a single staff. The melody is in 3/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The score is divided into measures by vertical bar lines. Above the staff, there are labels 'P.M.' (Piano Moderato) repeated several times. The notes are mostly quarter and eighth notes, with some rests. The final measure of the piece is circled, showing a double bar line and a final note. The score is presented in a clear, legible format with standard musical notation.

[illegible]

(D5) F5 Gb5 N.C. (D5) E5 F5 N.C. (D5) Gb5 F5 N.C. (D5) E5 F5 Ab5 Eb5

Gtrs. 1 and 2

Rhy. Fig. 2

\*Notes played by Gtr. 2 only. Both guitars play all notes when Rhy. Fig. 2 is later recalled.

end Rhy. Fig. 2

9

Bass

Bass Fig. 2

end Bass Fig. 2

spoken: They say drinkin' is a way to die But at the end dying is a way to drink

(D5) F5 Gb5 N.C. (D5) E5 F5 N.C. (D5) Gb5 F5 N.C. (D5) E5 F5 Ab5 (Eb)

Gtrs. 1 and 2

13

Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 (see bar 9)

pitch: G

**B** 1st Verse (0.40)

Unquenchable thirst burns you inside  
Inexhaustable craving for something

(D5) F5 Gb5 N.C. (D5) E5 F5 N.C. (D5) Gb5 F5 N.C. (D5) E5 F5 Ab5 Eb5

*Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 twice (see bar 9)*  
*Gtr. 1*

17

Gtr. 1

Bass

**C Pre-chorus** (0:56, 3.10)

[illegible]

*Fill 1* (3:10)  
(E5)

Grtr. 3

12 15 12 15 12 15

1 1 1

3



**Exterminate**      scars      already

E5      D5 E5      D5 E5

Gtrs. 1 and 2      Gtr. 2

25

Bass

2nd time, skip ahead to [K] Outro Chorus

made      (2.) Ready for      (1.) Ready for another drink      another drink      Can you wait      Can you wait

Gtr. 1 E5      D5 E5      F5 G5 E5      D5 E5 N.C.      (Bb) slight P.H. w/bar

27

Gtr. 2

Bass

**[D]** (1:13)

D5      C5      D5      G5      Eb5      D5      C5      F5      C/E

Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 twice (see bar 5)

30

Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 twice (see bar 5)

**[E] 2nd Verse (1:29)**

Detoxing      here come the      withdrawals      Whispering maybe you've gone too far

(D5) F5 Gb5 (D5)      E5 F5 (D5)      Gb5 F5 (D5)      E5 F5 Ab5 Eb5

Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 2 (see bar 9)

34

Deep within      things are getting      hot      Can't deny      take another shot

(D5) F5 Gb5 N.C.      (D5) E5 F5 N.C.      (D5) Gb5 F5 (Dm)

38

Gtr. 2

Bass

## F Chorus (1:44)

(Blooddrunk)  
(Blooddrunk)

wasted again  
You call me insane

and inside  
Degenerate

(F#5) E5 F#5 E5 G5 (F#5) E5 F#5 D5 G5 F#5 E5 A5 E5 F#5 E5 A5 E5

Gtrs 1 and 2  
Rhy. Fig. 3

P.M. ----- P.M. -----

42

Bass  
Bass Fig. 3

1. all the pain will fade 2. blooddrunk with a razor blade

F#5 C#5 A5 G5 F#5 C#5 A5 D5 E5 F#5 C#5 A5 D5

Gtr. 2 P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M.

45

Gtr. 1 end Rhy. Fig. 3 P.M. -----

Bass end Bass Fig. 3

## G Interlude (2:02)

E5 D5 E5 A5 F5 E5 F#5

Gtr. 3 (elec. w/dist.)

48

Gtrs. 1 and 2 P.M. let ring -----

Bass



1. G5 D/F# 2. (G5) (A)

51 Gtr. 3

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

Bass

PM

## H Bridge (2:18)

(F#5)  
Gtr. 1

53 P.M.

Gtr. 2

Bass

(play 2nd time only)

## I Keyboard Solo (2:36)

G#5

56 Gtrs. 1 and 2

Bass

### Fill 2 (2:18)

F#5  
Gtr. 3 N.H. dive w/bar

pitch: D

**59** **B5** **G#5** **B5** **A5**

PM PM PM PM PM PM PM PM PM PM PM PM PM PM

**J Guitar Solo (2:52)**

**66** **F#5** **A5** **D5** **F#5**

Gtr. 3

pick scrape

w/bar

Gtrs. 1 and 2

Bass

**69** **A5** **G5** **F#5** **A5** **D5**

PM PM PM PM PM PM PM PM PM PM PM PM PM PM



go back to Pre-chorus  
D5

**F#5** **A5** **E5** **F#5**

Gtr. 3 1 72 (24) 24 (24) 21 22 21 24 21 22 22 24 21 19 21 22 19 17 19 21 17 17 14 15 15 17 14

Gtr. 2 17 19 21 17 16 17 19 16 14 16 17 14 10 12 10 14 10

Gtr. 1 P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M.

Bass (4) 4 7 (7) 7 7 2 (2) 2 2 4 (4) 4 4 0 (0) 0 0

## K Outro Chorus (3:26)

(Blooddrunk)

wasted again

And inside

all the pain will fade

(F#5) E5 F#5 E5 G5 (F#5) E5 F#5 D5 G5 F#5 E5 A5 E5 F#5 E5 A5 E5 F#5 C#5 A5 G5

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 3 twice (see bar 42)

Gtr. 2

75 P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M.

4 4 4 4 4 2 4 4 2 5 4 4 4 4 4 2 4 4 0 5 11 11 9 9 9 9 11 11 9 9 11 11 13 14 11 14 16 14 12

Bass plays Bass Fig. 3 twice (see bar 42)

(Blooddrunk)

You call me insane

Degenerate

blooddrunk with a razor

(F#5) E5 F#5 E5 G5 (F#5) E5 F#5 D5 G5 F#5 E5 A5 E5 F#5 E5 A5 E5 F#5 C#5 A5 D5 E5

79 P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M.

4 4 4 4 4 2 4 4 2 5 4 4 4 4 4 2 4 4 0 5 11 11 9 9 9 9 11 11 9 9 11 11 13 14 11 14 16 16 13

(1.) blade

(Blooddrunk)

wasted again

And inside

all the pain will fade

(2.) (Blooddrunk)

You call me insane

Degenerate

blooddrunk with a razor

(F#5) E5 F#5 E5 G5 (F#5) E5 F#5 D5 G5 F#5 E5 A5 E5 F#5 E5 A5 E5 F#5 C#5 A5 G5

83 Gtr. 2 P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M.

19 19 19 18 19 18 18 18 17 19 16 18 18 19 16 16 19 19 19 16 18 (16) 11 13 14 11 14 16 16 13

blade

F#5 C#5 A5 D5 (F#5) E5 F#5 E5 F#5

87 P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M.

11 13 14 11 14 16 16 13 4 4 4 4 4 2 4 4 2 2 2 4 (4) (4)

Gtr. 1 P.M. P.M. P.M.

6 4 7 0 0 0 4 4 4 4 4 2 4 4 2 2 2 4 (4) (4)

Bass 4 7 0 0 0 4 4 4 4 4 2 4 4 2 2 4 (4) (4)

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fire's in their eyes and their words are really clear so beat it just beat it  
want to slay alive better do what you can so beat it just beat it

C5 D5 E5 D5

end Rhy. Fig. 1

27

You better run you better do what you can Don't want to see no blood don't be a macho man You  
You have to show them that you're really not scared You're playing with your life this ain't no truth or dare They'll

E5 D5 E5 D5

Gtr. 1 repeats Rhy. Fig. 1 (see bar 23)

Gtr. 2 (dist. off)

31 P.M. (repeat previous two bars) 2

Bass 2

want to be tough better do what you can so beat it but you want to be bad Just  
kick you then they beat you then they'll tell you it's fair so beat it but you want to be bad Just

C5 D5 E5 D5 (Em)

35 P.M. Gtr. 1

end Bass Fig. 3

## C Chorus (1:06, 1:54)

beat it (Beat it) Beat it (Beat it) No one wants to be defeated Showin'  
(D) (Em) (D) (Em)

39 Gtr. 1

Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 twice (see bar 15)

how funky and strong is your fight it doesn't matter who's wrong or right Just  
(D) (Em) (D) (Em)

Gtr. 2 plays Fill 1 four times (see below)

omit repeat on 1st Chorus (continue ahead to bar 47)

43

Bass substitutes Bass Fig. 2 on repeat of 2nd Chorus (see bar 19)

\*Don't play note in parenthesis 2nd time on 2nd Chorus.

Fill 1 (1:13, 2:01, 2:15, 3:24, 3:38, 3:52, 4:06)

Gtr. 2 (dist. off)

go back to [B] 2nd Verse

beat it (Beat it) Just beat it (Beat it) Just beat it (Beat it) Just beat it (Beat it) Just beat it (Beat it) Ooh

(D) (Em) (D)

47 Gtr. 1

Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 twice (see bar 15)

## D Interlude (2:22)

(1.) beat it beat it beat it  
(E5)

beat it beat it beat it  
(2.) Beat it beat it beat it

beat it beat it beat it

51 Gtr. 1 Rhy. Fig. 2

Bass

(1st time) Beat it beat it beat it

55 Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 four times (see bar 51)  
Gtr. 3 (elec. w/dist.)

Gtr. 2 (w/dist.) P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M.

Bass

\*w/bar -10 grad. bend  
\*Depress bar prior to picking note  
\*Note is played 2nd time only.

## E Guitar Solo (2:49)

E5

D5

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 twice (see bar 23)

Gtr. 3 (Eddie Van Halen)

59

Bass plays Bass Fig. 3 (see bar 23)

pitch: A E

\*T 14 \*T 14

\*Use pick-hand middle finger to tap harmonic at 14th fret

61

5 6 7 7



63 C5 D5 1/2 w/bar V 1

65 E5 D5 w/bar -2 1/2 P.H. w/bar V

67 E5 D5 E5 D5 P.H. 1

70 C5 D5 1/2 T 5 6 7 7

72 E5 D5 (Em) trem. pick grad bend

## F Outro Chorus (3:17)

Beat it (Beat it) Beat it (Beat it) No one wants to be defeated Showin'

(D) (Em) (D) (Em)

Gr. 3 (play 1st time only)

75 1/2 pick scrape

Gr. 1

Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 until fade (see bar 15)

how funky and strong is your fight It doesn't matter who's wrong or right Just

(D) (Em) (D) (Em)

Gr. 2 plays Fill 1 four times (see 2nd page)

Gr. 1

79 (repeat previous four bars) 4



## "SHOUT IT OUT LOUD" KISS

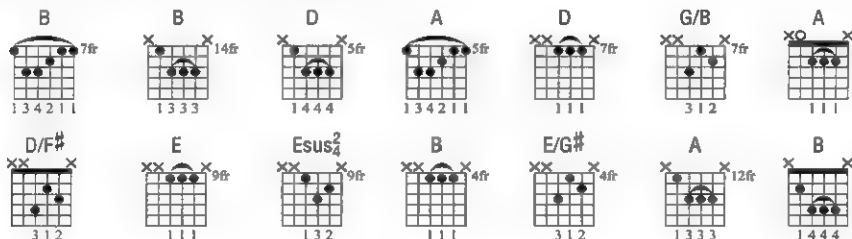
As heard on **DESTROYER** (CASABLANCA)

Words and Music by **Paul Stanley, Gene Simmons and Bob Ezrin** \* Transcribed by **Jeff Perrin**

All guitars tune down one half step (low to high, **E<sup>b</sup> A<sup>b</sup> D<sup>b</sup> G<sup>b</sup> B<sup>b</sup> E<sup>b</sup>**).

Bass tuning, low to high: **E<sup>b</sup> A<sup>b</sup> D<sup>b</sup> G<sup>b</sup>**.

All music sounds in the key of **B<sup>b</sup>**, one half step lower than written.



### A Intro (0:00)

Moderately ♩ = 134

N.C.(B) (E/G#)

(B)

(E/G#)

(B)

(E/G#)(B)

(A)

Gtr. 1 (elec. w/dist.)

1

Gtr. 1 (elec. w/dist.)

Gtr. 2 (elec. w/dist.)

Bass (w/chorus) w/pick

w. slight fdbk.

1. Well the

B

5



## B Verses (0:14, 0:58)

night's begun and you want some fun Do you think you're gonna find it (think you're gonna find it)  
(2.) don't feel good there's a way you could Don't sit there broken-hearted (sit there broken-hearted)

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

Bass (chorus off)

\*Omit note in parenthesis first time

You gotta treat yourself like number one Do you need to be reminded (need to be reminded)  
Call all your friends in the neighborhood and get the party started (get the party started)

13

## C Pre-chorus (0:28, 1:13)

(1.) It doesn't matter what you do or say Just forget the things that you've been told  
(2.) Don't let 'em tell you that there's too much noise They're too old to really understand

D G/B D G/B D G/B D A D/F# A E Esus<sup>2</sup> E D

17

Rhy. Fig. 1

Rhy. Fig. 1a

Bass Fig. 1

# "SHOUT IT OUT LOUD"

the Pedals that  
**Make The Tone**  
www.BossUS.com tone

We can't do it any other way Everybody's got to rock and roll stand whoa whoa-nooh  
You'll still get rowdy with the girls and boys 'cause it's time for you to take a roll stand yeah yeah

G/B D

G/B D

G/B D

A

D/F# A

B

end Rhy. Fig. 1

21

\*Hold chord for four beats when recalled as Rhy. Fig. 1 in [E]

\*Hold chord for four beats when recalled as Rhy. Fig. 1a in [E]

end Bass Fig. 1

## D Chorus (0:44, 1:29)

Shout it shout it shout it out loud

B E/G#

B

E/G#

B

E/G#

B

E/G#

A

B

26

Gtr 1

Gtr 2

Bass

Shout it shout it shout it out loud

B

E/G#

B

E/G#

B

E/G#

B

A

B

1. loud 2. If you

30



## E Guitar Solo (1:39)

**loud**  
 D G/B D G/B D G/B D A D/F# A E Esus<sup>2</sup>/<sub>4</sub> E D G/B D G/B D  
 Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 (see bar 17)  
 Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 1a (see bar 17)

34

Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 (see bar 17)

39

## F Breakdown (1:55)

Shout it shout it shout it out loud (You got to have a party)  
 Shout it shout it shout it out loud (Turn it up louder)  
 N.C.(B) (A)

43

2nd time only

47

end Bass Fig. 2

51

Bass repeats Bass Fig. 2 (see bar 47)

## G Outro (2:24)

Shout it shout it shout it out loud (I hear it gettin' louder)  
 Shout it shout it shout it out loud (and everybody shout it now)  
 Shout it shout it shout it out loud (Oh)  
 B E/G# B E/G# B E/G# B A

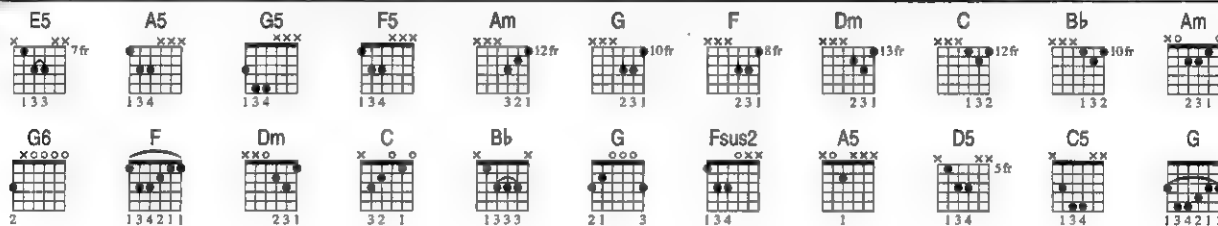
55

(play 3 times)

## "CARRY ON WAYWARD SON" KANSAS

As heard on **LEFTOVERTURE** (KIRSHNER)

Words and Music by **Kerry Livgren** \* Transcribed by **Jesse Gress and Jeff Perrin**



### A Intro (0:00)

### B (0:16)

Carry on my wayward son  
There'll be peace when you  
are done Lay your weary  
head to rest Don't you cry  
no more

N.C.(Am7)  
Gtrs. 1 and 2 (elec. w/dist.)  
Rhy. Fig. 1

(D)

1. (G) (D/F#) (G) (D/F#)

1 8

8 Bass Fig. 1

\*slide first time only

end Rhy. Fig. 1

end Bass Fig. 1

### C (0:28)

N.C.(E5)  
Gtr. 1

E5

Rhy. Fig. 2

P.M.

end Rhy. Fig. 2

13

Gtr. 2  
Rhy. Fig. 2a

end Rhy. Fig. 2a

Bass  
Bass Fig. 2

end Bass Fig. 2

### D 1st Guitar Solo (0:43)

N.C.(Am7)

(D)

(G)

(D/F#)

Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 1 twice (see bar 9)

Gtr. 3 (elec. w/dist.)

17

Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 twice (see bar 9)



GUITAR WORLD 149

# "CARRY ON WAYWARD SON"

The Pedals That  
Make The Tone  
www.BossUS.com tone

Though my eyes could see I still was a blind man Am G6 Fmaj7 G6 Am G6 Fmaj7 G6  
Rhy. Fig. 3  
Gtr. 5 (acous.)  
fingerstyle

38

I hear the voices when I'm dreaming Dm C Bb C Dm C G  
end Rhy. Fig. 3

42

**G** 1st Chorus (1:39)  
Carry on my wayward son Am C G F#us2 Am C G  
\*Gtr. 1 (w/clean tone)  
let ring throughout

46

\*Doubled simile by Gtr. 5 throughout

Bass  
Bass Fig. 3

**H** (1:52)  
Lay your weary head to rest Am C G F don't you cry no more N.C.(Am7) (D) (G) (D/F#)  
Gtrs. 1 and 2 (w/dist.)

50

end Bass Fig. 3

\*Notes in parenthesis played first time only.



## "CARRY ON WAYWARD SON"

### I 2nd Verse (2:03)

Masquerading as a man with a reason my charade is the event of the season  
On a stormy sea of moving emotion tossed about I'm like a ship on the ocean

Am G6 F G6 Am G F G

Gtr. 5 plays Rhy. Fig. 3 simile (see bar 38)

56 Bass

And if I claim to be a wise man it surely means that I don't know  
I set a course for winds of fortune but I hear the voices say

60 Dm C Bb C Dm C G G

### J 2nd and 3rd Choruses (2:33, 3:54)

Carry on my wayward son there'll be peace when you are done

Am C G F5 Am C G

Gtr. 1 (w/clean tone)

65

Bass plays Bass Fig. 3 (see bar 46)

Lay your weary head to rest don't you cry no more Go  
don't you cry don't you cry cry no

69 Am C G F

(2nd time) skip ahead to Q

### K Interlude (2:47)

N.C.(Am) (G) (Am) D5 C5 N.C.(Am) (G) (Am) D5

Gtr. 1 (dist.)

Rhy. Fig. 4

end Rhy. Fig. 4

73

Gtr. 2 P.M. ....

P.M. ....

Bass

Bass Fig. 4

end Bass Fig. 4

## L Organ Solo (3:02)

N.C.(E7#9)

Gtrs. 1 and 2

Rhy. Fig. 5

P.M.

end Rhy. Fig. 5

77

Bass  
Bass Fig. 5

end Bass Fig. 5

## M (3:10)

(Am) (G) (Am) D5 C5 N.C.(Am) (G) (Am) D5

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 4 (see bar 73)

Gtr. 2

81

Bass plays Bass Fig. 4 (see bar 73)

## N 2nd Guitar Solo (3:25)

N.C.(E7#9)

Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 5 (see bar 77)

85

Bass plays Bass Fig. 5 (see bar 77)

pitch: G

## O (3:32)

(Am7)

Gtrs. 1 and 2

89

Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 (see bar 9)

## P Bridge (3:44)

Carry on You will always remember

Carry on Nothing equals the splendor

A5 G5 F5 N.C.

A5 G5 F5 N.C.

92



# "CARRY ON WAYWARD SON"

go back to **I** 3rd Chorus

Now your life's no longer empty Surely heaven waits for you

D5 C5 Bb5 N.C. D5 C5 G

96 *let ring*

**Q** (4:13)

*more*

N.C.(E5)

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 (see bar 13)  
Gtr. 2

100

Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 (see bar 13)

**R** 3rd Guitar Solo (4:28)

N.C.(F#5)

(A5)

(E5)

(F#5)

(A5)

(E5)

Gtr. 3

104

Gtrs. 1 and 2

Rhy. Fig. 6

light

P.M.

light

P.M.

*let ring*

2

Bass

Bass Fig. 6

(F#5)

(A5)

(E5)

(F#5)

(A5)

108

light P.M.

light P.M.

light P.M.

light P.M.

## The Pedals That Make The Tone

P.M. . . . .

154 GUITAR WORLD



# SOUND

MODTONE EFFECT PEDALS 155 SIERRA SUNRISE SERIES SA20CEWR ACOUSTIC ELECTRIC GUITAR 160 LASHBROOK LTD. ELLC FIC GUITAR 160

## BOOGIE DOWN

Mesa/Boogie Express 5:50 1x12 combo

ON  
DISC

BY CHRIS GILL

**A**MP SHOPPING can be a lot like buying a new car. If you're on a limited budget, you usually have to settle for an underpowered American- or Asian-made model that's low on frills and thrills. If you want a high-performance model packed with luxurious features, expect to spend a small fortune.

Mesa/Boogie Express Series amplifiers and combos are the music industry equivalent of a Mini Cooper. Though extremely compact, they deliver plenty of hair-raising power as well as a full selection of useful high-performance features not typically found on products in their price class. Priced just beyond the "budget" or "entry-level" range, Mesa/Boogie Express Series amps offer an affordable alternative for gigging pros or anyone else who needs a versatile amp that can hold its own with the big boys.

Mesa/Boogie offers two Express models: the 25-watt 5:25, which is powered by EL-84 tubes to provide "British" voicing, and the 50-watt 5:50, which uses 6L6 tubes to produce more distinctly "American" tones. The 5:25 is available as 1x10 or 1x12 combos while the 5:50 combos offer a selection of single or dual 12-inch speaker options. Both models are also available in head-only configurations. I took a ride on the 5:50 Express 1x12 combo.

### FEATURES

FORTY YEARS AGO, in 1969, Randall Smith invented the first Mesa/Boogie amp when he squeezed a tweed Bassman circuit and a 12-inch speaker into a Fender Princeton combo cabinet. The Express 5:50 1x12 combo remains true to the spirit of the original Boogie amp by providing the tone and versatility of a big amp in a sur-



Clean/Crunch and Blues/Burn modes provide everything from pristine clean to molten metal.

Individual master volume controls for each channel provide the functionality of two amps in one.



# CHECK

ESP LTD STANDARD PB 500 GUITAR 162 VOX JAM VOX COMPUTER INTERFACE & MODELING SOFTWARE 164 SQUIER CLASSIC VIBE SERIES BASSES 166

prisingly small package. Even better, the Express includes several of the most popular innovations that Smith and company have developed over the years, such as a high-gain cascading preamp, fully independent channel switching and Duo-Class power.

The Express 5:50 features two fully independent and individually voiced channels, each featuring its own set of gain, treble, mid, bass, contour, reverb level and master volume controls. Both channels have a mode switch that allows you to tailor the distortion and response characteristics to your preference, with Channel 1 providing a selection of Clean/Crunch tones and Channel 2 offering Blues/Burn choices.

Two 6L6 tubes provide 50 watts of power in Class A/B mode, but the patented Duo-Class feature, accessible via a rear panel switch, also offers the option of powering the amp with just one tube to produce five watts of Class A single-ended power (which emphasizes the sweet second harmonic, an octave above the note played). Five 12AX7 tubes are used for producing Mesa/Boogie's signature cascaded high-gain tones and for the reverb and effect loop circuits.

The Express 5:50 combo ships with a heavy-duty footswitch for control-

ling channel select, contour on/off and reverb on/off functions. If you prefer to control these features with MIDI program change commands, four 1/4-inch jacks are provided for switching channels, reverb on/off, contour 1 on/off and contour 2 on/off individually. Should you forget to bring your footswitch controller to the gig, you can still control contour on/off and channel select functions via switches on the front panel. The effect loop has mono send and return jacks and a nonvariable level designed for use with everything from stomp boxes to studio-quality rack processors.

## PERFORMANCE

**JUST ABOUT EVERY** great Mesa/Boogie tone (and then some) lurks inside this compact powerhouse. Channel 1's Clean mode combined with the luscious Accutronics spring reverb produces one of the best clean tones I've heard from a Mesa,

with a fat roundness and three-dimensional clarity that rivals a vintage Twin Reverb. Switch over to Crunch mode for tight, gnarly overdrive with plenty of punchy low end, throaty midrange and razor-sharp presence. Channel 2's Blues mode is loose, raw and raunchy, but cranking up the mids can produce singing, violin-like overdrive compa-



**MESA/BOOGIE EXPRESS 5:50 1x2 COMBO**

**STREET PRICE:** \$1,299.00

**MANUFACTURER:**

Mesa/Boogie,  
mesaboogie.com

**OUTPUT:** Selectable between 50 watts Class A/B and 5 watts Class A

**TUBES:** Two 6L6 (power amp), five 12AX7 (preamp/reverb/effect loop)

**SPEAKER:** Celestion

C90 12-inch

**CHANNELS:** Two

**FRONT PANEL:** Input;

Channel 1: Clean/Crunch mode switch, gain, treble, mid, bass, reverb and master controls, contour on/off/footswitch selector, contour control; Channel 2: Blues/Burn mode switch, gain, treble, mid, bass, reverb and master controls, contour on/off/footswitch selector, contour control; channel/footswitch select switch, power, standby

**REAR PANEL:** Contour 1, contour 2, channel and reverb external footswitch 1/4-inch jacks; send and return 1/4-inch jacks; 50-watt/5-watt switch; eight- and four-ohm (x2) speaker outputs

**OTHER:** Footswitch (channel select, reverb on/off, contour on/off functions) included, long-pan Accutronics spring reverb

The Contour controls duplicate the dramatic EQ curves of a graphic EQ without a mess of sliders.

rable to the classic Boogie Mark I. Burn mode is where modern metal tones lurk, and you can dial in brutal scooped mid rhythm tones with the Contour control and disengage it to boost midrange definition for in-your-face solos with all the volume you need.

The tone controls interact significantly, and while that makes it tricky to dial in exactly the tone you have in mind, it ultimately provides a wider and more versatile range of tones. Although the 5:50 lacks a presence control, it's really not necessary thanks to the expanded EQ range that the Contour control delivers. The ability to switch between the sweet, harmonically rich distortion of the five-watt Class A mode and the focused grit and growl of 50-watt Class A/B mode gives the 5:50 two very distinct tonal personalities.

The Celestion C90 12-inch speaker and the combo's open-back cabinet design deliver excellent performance for almost any variety of tones, but some metal players may find that the bass response isn't always tight enough. Fortunately, the 5:50 features individual eight- and four-ohm speaker outputs for using a variety of external speaker options. When connected to a Mesa 4x12 Rectifier cabinet, the bass response of the 5:50's Crunch and Burn tones became as tight as PVC underpants.

## THE BOTTOM LINE

**IF YOU PLAY** a variety of studio and performance gigs and need a compact amp that covers everything from pristine clean to the dirtiest metal tones, the Express 5:50 is the way to go. Its price is as small as its size, but its sound and versatility are about as big as it gets. ★

CON	
COMPACT; TWO INDIVIDUALLY VOICED CHANNELS; DUO-CLASS FEATURE	NO PRESENCE CONTROL; TRICKY TONE CONTROLS





# STEP FAMILY

**Modtone Speedbox Distortion XL, Dyno Drive, Atomic Phaser, Vintage Analog Delay and Aqua Chorus pedals**

BY ERIC KIRKLAND

**M**ODTONE PEDALS are the result of a joint venture between an American OEM manufacturer and a Chinese factory. Designed to take up less room on a pedal board (each is about the size of a typical MXR pedal), they almost magically affect the sweetest areas of a guitar's midrange.

Although Modtones are also among the least expensive pedals available today, their construction quality is outstanding, and in some cases their performance characteristics eclipse even the priciest effect pedals. In their short production life, they have already garnered international acclaim and are finding their way into the hands of today's most discriminating artists. All the pedals can be powered with a standard nine-volt battery or Boss-type adaptor.

## SPEEDBOX DISTORTION XL

**THIS IS A TRUE DISTORTION PEDAL** consisting of a high-gain preamp built within a pedal housing. The Speedbox is intended for use in front of a clean amp so that all of the distortion and final EQ comes from the pedal. There are controls for tone, level and gain, and the bypass is split. The gain level is consistent, so as you dial up the knob the distorted signal just becomes louder. I found that the level knob was best used to achieve unity gain with my clean amp's volume level, to avoid any signal dropout when the pedal is switched on. The character of the Speedbox's distortion is gritty and aggressive in the upper mids, with rumbling and loose bass tones, much like a Nineties-era Marshall amp.

High-intensity LEDs make it easy to see which effects are on from across the stage.

All pedals feature high-quality jacks, pots and switches for long hassle-free operation.



## DYNO DRIVE

**THE DYNO DRIVE IS A CLASSIC** overdrive pedal, built to focus a lot of its energy in the midrange and work equally well to provide some hair in front of a clean amp or push an amp's existing distortion into the stratosphere. A familiar three-knob setup includes controls for tone, level and drive. The brilliant upper-mid overtones are very pronounced and focused in a way that allows the pedal's tone to mix well with a large number of amps. It's very punchy and never overly saturated or fat. On its own with a clean amp, the Dyno can either push the amp's first gain stage to break up naturally or add its own stinging gain. Like the Speedbox, the Dyno has a split bypass.

## ATOMIC PHASER

**THE ATOMIC IS A MONSTER.** While it has the classic filtered swoosh effect, it creates it with a pronounced wah effect that is intoxicating. Effect rate can be adjusted from 100ms to 6.5s, and the



**LIST PRICES:** Speedbox Distortion XL, \$49.95; Dyno Drive and Aqua Chorus, \$99.95; Atomic Phaser and Vintage Analog Delay, \$119.95

**MANUFACTURER:** SHS International, [Modtone-effects.com](http://Modtone-effects.com)

### FEATURES AND CONTROLS:

**Speedbox:** Distortion: tone, level, gain (x2); **Dyno Drive:** tone, level, drive; **Atomic Phaser:** rate, depth; **Aqua Chorus:** rate, depth; **Vintage Analog Delay:** time, repeat, mix.

### CONNECTIONS:

**Input:** In (mono), Guitar Out (mono)

### CIRCUITRY:

**BYPASS:** Speedbox Distortion and Dyno Drive: Split; Atomic Phaser, Aqua Chorus and Vintage Analog Delay: Buffered

**POWER:** Nine volts via battery or Boss-style adaptor

depth range is well tuned to maintain the effect's impact. Regardless of the amp's gain levels, the Atomic Phaser has a strong and articulate voice that can also be warm and soothing. I was even able to produce a perfect English siren effect with bends and high tapping. The bypass is buffered.

## VINTAGE ANALOG DELAY

**GUITARISTS TYPICALLY PREFER** the natural decay and warmth of analog echo and the clarity of digital delay. Modtone has achieved about the best balance of the two with its Vintage Analog Delay. The pedal combines an analog delay chip with very smart design choices. Delay times range from 130ms to 350ms, allowing rich-sounding slap-back delay, long repeating echoes and precise single repeats. The Vintage Analog Delay tracks at every speed without any level drop or modulation. It has controls for time, mix and repeat and a buffered bypass.

## AQUA CHORUS

**THE AQUA CHORUS** distinguishes itself from other chorus pedals in ways that make it more useable in a variety of rigs and settings. Where many chorus pedals have tone that sounds muddled and overly lush, the Aqua Chorus is neatly defined. It treats single notes and chords with the same girth of tone, it's very responsive to touch, and there is no midrange dropout in the detuned waveform. I really marveled at the way this pedal keeps the bass intact and never reduced the signal level. It definitely comes closer to an authentic Leslie rotary-speaker tone than most of the exalted vintage chorus pedals. It has controls for rate and depth and a buffered bypass.

## THE BOTTOM LINE

**MODTONE HAS REDEFINED** what guitarists can expect in inexpensive effect pedals while it has established a new plateau in effect performance. The Dyno Drive and Speedbox Distortion are very capable pedals in their respective arenas, but the Aqua Chorus, Vintage Analog Delay and Atomic Phaser produce tones and levels of definition that compete or hands-down whip the high-dollar competition. \*



CON	
FLAWLESS BUILD QUALITY; JAW-DROPPING TIME AND MODULATION EFFECTS; LOW COST	DISTORTION AND OVERDRIVE CAN DROP LEVELS BELOW UNITY VOLUME

# MOUNTAIN HIGH

**Sierra Sunrise Series SA28CEWR acoustic-electric guitar**

BY ERIC KIRKLAND

**A**RTISTRY IS AN EXPRESSION of inspiration, and the Sierra Guitar Company discovered its muse in the beauty of the untouched Sierra Nevada mountains. The company has not only taken its name from the peaks but also chosen to employ materials, shapes and images on its guitars that are in some way evocative of the mountains. In that spirit, the guitars are also intentionally crafted to have an earthy appearance and simplicity of design.

Sierra's Sunrise Series, including the SA28CEWR on my test bench, are affordable auditorium-size acoustic-electrics designed to deliver balanced performance at an affordable price—a difficult goal when it comes to acoustic guitars.

## FEATURES

**THE SUNRISE AUDITORIUM** is a medium-scale guitar. With a body slightly larger than a parlor guitar, it is an excellent choice for projecting across small clubs, playing at home and recording—situations in which the resonance of a large instrument can be overwhelming. Mahogany is used for the back and sides, and the soundboard is made of select spruce slabs. In keeping with the natural theme, a wood inlay is used for the rosette and rosewood binds the body. A deep cutaway adds greatly to playability, allowing total access to the Sierra's rosewood fingerboard. The 12th-fret sunrise inlay is an attractive touch, and the rosewood bridge mirrors the

headstock crown. I really liked the comfort-grip die-cast tuners as well. They're wide, stable and make precise adjustments much easier than with smaller keys.

The Barcus Berry Realm III electronics package is an excellent addition to the Sunrise because it's especially quiet for the money and provides controls for presence, treble, mid, bass and volume, as well as a tuner. Outputs include a quarter-inch and an XLR jack, and the battery door is conveniently located at the jack plate.

## PERFORMANCE

**EVEN THOUGH MANY LOW-PRICED** acoustics are difficult to play, the Sunrise's neck was quite com-

Barcus Berry Realm III electronics include a built-in tuner.

fortable and the setup was excellent. A lot of players will like Sierra's Sunrise guitar because it doesn't give you too much of any one frequency band. It's clear and reserved, allowing players to focus more on songwriting and technique than a particular tone. If you do want a particular EQ curve, the Barcus Berry system provides a deep range of



**SIERRA SUNRISE SERIES SA28CEWR ACOUSTIC-ELECTRIC GUITAR**

**LIST PRICE:** \$459.00  
**MANUFACTURER:** Sierra Guitars, sierraguitars.net  
**BODY:** Mahogany back and sides, Spruce Top  
**NECK:** Mahogany  
**FINGERBOARD:** Rosewood  
**SCALE SIZE:** Auditorium  
**FRETS:** 20  
**HARDWARE:** Rosewood Bridge, Die-cast comfort-grip tuner  
**CONTROLS:** Treble, presence, mid, bass, volume, tuner  
**ELECTRONICS:** Barcus Berry Realm III

adjustment and the Sunrise's innate neutrality makes a soundman's job very simple.

## THE BOTTOM LINE

**IF YOU'RE A BEGINNER** or a player on a budget, Sierra's Sunrise SA28CEWR is a solid choice. Its auditorium size creates a warm and focused tone, it's well made and nicely appointed with a Barcus Berry Realm III electronics system. ★

	CON
BALANCED TONE, NATURAL WOOD AESTHETICS, BARCUS BERRY REALM III ELECTRONICS WITH BUILT IN TUNER	ACOUSTIC RESPONSE COULD BE LIVELIER

## ON DISC

## BUZZ BIN NEW, HIP AND UNDER THE RADAR

### HELLO, LARRY

**Lashbrook LTH-1 electric guitar**

**LARRY LASHBROOK** is a South Florida legend both for his 45 years of master luthier services and for being Yngwie Malmsteen's personal guitar tech for the past two decades. At the urging of his clients and family, Lashbrook recently began producing his own line of custom guitars. His LTH-1 features a solid, carved curly maple body, custom wound passive humbucker pickups

with exotic wood covers, a five-piece curly maple set neck with a compound radius Brazilian rosewood fretboard and massive Dunlop 6000 frets. There's no taper or relief to the thin neck carve, and Lashbrook's signature setup provides incredibly low action with explosive dynamic abilities and no trace of fret buzz.

Chief among the LTH-1's numerous unique features is the

patent-pending Lashbrook Tune-O-Matic style piezo bridge and ebony trapeze tailpiece. Lashbrook's method of resonance transfer allows this piezo system to create the most realistic acoustic tones by a considerable margin (the system is available separately for retrofit on other manufacturers' guitars). Passive or active electronics are optional to route the humbucker and piezo



pickup signals to single or dual output jacks. Lashbrook's marriage of old-world craftsmanship and genius innovation places the LTH-1 in the elite of ultra high-end instruments.

—Eric Kirkland

**LASHBROOK LTH-1**

**LIST PRICE:** \$6,750.00 (options may be extra)  
**MANUFACTURER:** Lashbrook Guitars, LLC, lashbrookguitars.com

## NEW EQ

**INTENSE GUITARS**  
500 HOURS WITH  
HOFER GATE PIANO



## STETSAN

STETSAN PRO E VIBRATO





# A SHADE OF BLACK

**ESP LTD Standard PB-500 guitar**

BY ERIC KIRKLAND

**E**SP IS ONE OF THE ORIGINAL guitar companies to focus almost exclusively on building instruments for shred-happy technicians. The roster of heavy-hitting professionals that presently make ESP their guitar of choice aptly demonstrates the company's recognition.

Given the company's reputation for creating radical designs, it's easy to imagine a classic-looking guitar like the LTD Standard PB-500 getting overlooked. But that would be unfortunate. The PB-500 is a capable high-gain performer, but its set of Seymour Duncan P-Rail pickups vastly increases its versatility and exhibits the guitar's acoustic properties more intimately than the high-output humbuckers that power most of ESP's line.

## FEATURES

WHERE SO MANY of ESP's guitars are diabolically shaped and rigidly pointed, the PB-500 exudes a classy vibe, with long flowing lines, conservative curves and a conventional headstock. If you want the P-Rail pickup model that I tested, it comes only in satin black (the other PB-500 model has a flamed maple top with Duncan Alnico IIs). The visually balanced all-mahogany body is quite lightweight and carved to a plateau for right-hand comfort. Fretboard access is also superb, thanks to a shaved neck heel and wide double cutaways.

All of these ergonomic attributes add to the now-famous ESP playability, but it's the set mahogany neck that really allows fingers fly effortlessly to across the PB-500. The nut is a standard 42mm width, yet its special convex fretboard edges make this neck feel less wide than other guitars with identical specs. This nut is compensated and uses the Earvana system, creating intonation that is nearly perfect at all positions. ESP calls the neck carve a "thin U contour," which does not aptly describe the palm-friendly roundness that is also a part of this fast shape. Players with average-size or small hands will find the PB-500's neck to be an excellent match and especially accommodating to difficult techniques. The 22 tall-and-fat frets allow a light touch and help players create nuances of tone using the strings alone. Pearlloid acrylic binds the board, leaving

no exposed fret edges, and continues around the headstock.

The chrome Tune-O-Matic bridge and tailpiece add attack and brilliance to the guitar's natural sustain and low-midrange punch, but the core of the PB-500's tonal flexibility must be credited to Seymour Duncan's P-Rail pickups. Their specialized split-coil design essentially joins a blade-type single-coil with a true P90 single-coil into a first-of-its-kind housing. A mini-toggle selects the pickups' operation as single-coil, P90 or a unique-sounding humbucking mode. Other controls include a three-way pickup selector, master volume and master tone.

## PERFORMANCE

MOST PLAYERS DON'T ASSOCIATE ESP guitars with superb clean tones, but the PB-500 excels in this department thanks largely to the Duncan P-Rails. Single-coil tones sound pure—neither overly warm nor glassy—and I was impressed by the amount of ring and resonance they exhibited in both positions. When they are combined, the PB-500 produces sounds akin to a Strat's "notched" fourth position, where the mids become hollow and deep.

The P90 tone is more aggressive through the mids, with a snarl and bite typical of the overwound-coil design. When any of these single-coil settings are combined with high gain, the ESP demonstrates a balance of brilliant highs and sharp lows that sounds more like an airy flute than a compressed violin.

Of course, the fattest tones come from the humbucking mode. Because these are not high-powered humbuckers and the combination of coils is so unique, metal licks and power chords sing beautifully but also deliver acoustic details that are not specifically produced by any other pickup. Humbucking or not, the P-Rails are pleasantly quiet and well behaved. I found the guitars match best with crunchy, medium-gain amp settings. This really brought the midrange bark to the forefront and illuminated the highest level of overtones.

## THE BOTTOM LINE

ESP'S LTD STANDARD PB-500 is the definition of a modern classic guitar. It's attractive in an archetypal sense but also fresh in design and replete with contemporary comfort-enhancing

**ESP LTD STANDARD PB-500**

**LIST PRICE:** \$929.00  
**MANUFACTURER:** The ESP Guitar Company, [espguitars.com](http://espguitars.com)

**BODY:** Mahogany  
**NECK:** Set, mahogany, with thin "U" contour

**FINGERBOARD:** Rosewood bound in acrylic pearloid

**SCALE LENGTH:** 24 3/4 inches  
**FRETS:** 22

**HARDWARE:** Chrome Tune-O-Matic bridge and stop tail, Grover tuners

**CONTROLS:** Master volume, master tone, three-way pickup selector switch, three-way pickup mode selector

**PICKUPS:** Two Seymour Duncan P-Rails

**ON DISC**



The Earvana nut system ensures perfect intonation at practically all points on the neck.

The thin, U-shaped neck is a comfortable compromise between a thin shredder's neck and a round vintage-style shape.

Duncan P-Rail Pickups are switchable between a blade single-coil, a P-90 single-coil or humbucker with coils combined.

contours. The easy-to-grip U-shaped neck is fast yet round enough to satisfy players who like to riff and chord for long periods in a single position. Best of all, the Seymour Duncan P-Rail pickups can be switched between blade-style and P90 single-coils or used as full humbuckers. No matter what style you play, there's something in this guitar for everyone! **E**

PROS	CONS
THREE-MODE DUNCAN P-RAILS ARE VERSATILE AND EXCEL AT CRUNCH TONES; THE NECK IS EASY TO NAVIGATE	NOT WELL-SUITED TO TYPICAL HIGH-POWER METAL TONES

# RAM JAM

## Vox JamVox computer interface system and modeling software

BY CHRIS GILL

**I**S THE PRACTICE AMP OBSOLETE? Maybe not yet, but if you own a computer it's pretty hard to resist the allure of amp and effect modeling software, especially since most packages provide a ton of tones and effects for a very modest investment. Of course, the big trade-off is that you need to settle for playing through wimpy computer speakers or headphones, unless you want to fork over a few hundred more bucks on a decent set of monitors.

The Vox JamVox is an all-in-one software/interface/monitor package designed for practice and jamming applications. Whereas most amp/effect modeling software is designed for recording applications, JamVox includes a variety of helpful practice tools, such as the Guitar XTraktion (GXT) function, which cancels or isolates recorded guitar parts from WAV, AIFF, MP3, WMA or AAC audio files. It also has the ability to loop a section of a song, transpose a song's pitch without affecting its tempo, or change the tempo without affecting pitch. JamVox even includes a metronome, 100 drum patterns and a "guitar karaoke" CD that has backing tracks to 28 well-known classic rock songs.

### FEATURES

JAMVOX IS AN INTEGRATED hardware/software system featuring amp/cabinet/effect modeling software with music library, basic recording and GXT functions and a USB audio interface with two three-inch speakers and a wide variety of input and output jacks. The software is compatible with Windows XP and Vista and Mac OS X (10.4 or higher).

The software's modeling section has 19 amp models, 12 cabinet models and 54 effect models for programming a wide variety of tones. Amp models include outstanding Vox AC15 and AC30 emulations as well as "UK," "Tweed," "Black," "Boutique" and "Modern" variations. The effects consist of 18 "pedals," 12 modulation effects, 11 delay effects, 12 reverb effects and noise reduction. Programming tones is easy—just drag and drop the desired amp/speaker combination and effects to the program window in any



LIST PRICE: \$340.00

MANUFACTURER:

Vox, voxamps.com

SOFTWARE: 19 amp

models, 12 cabinet mod-

els, 54 effect models,

and Guitar XTraktion

function; song library

can play WAV, AIFF, MP3,

WMA and AAC files

MONITOR: Two

three-inch speakers,

two-in/two-out USB

audio interface, guitar

input, mic input, mic

level, output level,

headphone output,

monitor level, USB jack,

expression pedal jack,

footswitch jack, stereo

line outputs and stereo

line inputs

OTHER: Comes bundled

with a 28-song "guitar

karaoke" CD

MINIMUM

REQUIREMENTS:

(PC) Windows XP

or Vista, Pentium 4

1.6GHz, 512MB RAM,

1024x768 16-bit color

monitor; (Mac) Mac OS

X 10.4, Power PC G4 or

Intel CPU, 512MB RAM,

1024x768 32,000-color

monitor

The two three-inch speakers do a good job of delivering big-amp tones.



order you desire. Individual control panels for the amp and one selected effect unit appear under the signal chain display. Note that a maximum of six effects are available at once (two pedals and one modulation, delay, reverb and noise-reduction effect each). A tuner and pickup modeling functions are also included.

The monitor features a USB jack, a 1/4-inch guitar input, an XLR mic input, mic, output and monitor level controls, a headphone output, expression pedal and footswitch jacks, and stereo aux/line inputs and outputs. A dedicated driver keeps latency at a minimum when using the JamVox software, but the monitor can also function as an two-in/two-out audio interface with 16-bit 44.1-96kHz input and 24-bit 44.1-96kHz output when used with ASIO/CoreAudio-driver software packages.

### PERFORMANCE

JAMVOX IS WORTH THE PRICE of admission for the sound quality of its amp and effect modeling section alone. The monitor's speakers do a good job of providing big amp sound, but the tones maintain their ample characteristics even when the line

outputs are connected to much larger studio monitors.

The GXT function is probably the JamVox's most interesting and unique feature for guitarists who want to learn how to play their favorite songs. This is not an automatic function—depending on the nature of the recorded material, it can take a bit of effort to isolate or remove a guitar track satisfactorily. GXT provides functions similar to notch, high-pass and low-pass filters, allowing you to select low- and high-frequency targets, stereo positioning (for removing or isolating guitar parts panned off-center, for example), bandwidth and gain. Note that GXT will remove or isolate other audio content in the same range such as vocals and snare drums, and the final result can sound unnatural.

Once you've mastered the GXT function, the software makes it easy and fun to learn guitar solos and parts from your favorite songs, first by isolating them and then by replacing the original performance with your own. The tempo and pitch transposition features also work well, although sound quality diminishes at more extreme settings. As a DIY learning tool, JamVox is without peer.

### THE BOTTOM LINE

MOST AMP AND EFFECT MODELING software is useful only for recording, but JamVox takes the concept one step further by providing practice, learning and jamming functions. It's an exceptionally helpful tool that can help beginning to intermediate guitarists sound and play better faster than they ever imagined.

EXCELLENT AMP AND EFFECT MODELS; FULLY INTEGRATED SYSTEM; POWERFUL GXT FUNCTION	CON: GXT CAN BE TRICKY TO USE EFFECTIVELY; SOFTWARE WORKS ONLY WITH MONITOR ATTACHED
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# TRIPLE PLAY

## Squier Classic Vibe Series basses

BY ED FRIEDLAND

**A**S A BUDGET-CONSCIOUS sibling, Squier has been cranking out less-expensive versions of classic Fender instruments since 1982. Some of those earliest Japanese-built Squiers are fetching a pretty penny these days. Why? Because they were excellent instruments, and players who couldn't get past the Squier name on the headstock lost out on some great axes.

Since then, Squier has continued to build solid quality, intro-level instruments—mostly stock Fender designs, with a few unique models thrown in for variety. But this year, with the release of the Classic Vibe Series, Squier has taken a big step forward and backward. The three basses that make up the series—the Jazz Bass '60s, Precision Bass '50s and Precision Bass '60s—look, play and sound great, and their under-\$500 price tags will fit the tightest budgets.

### FEATURES

**YOU'VE SEEN THESE** instruments before—a Fifties-style single-coil Precision, a Sixties split-coil Precision and a Sixties Jazz—but what sets these models apart from their predecessors is the attention to detail and materials. All three have basswood bodies, bolt-on maple necks (tinted for a vintage look), 20 vintage-style frets, classic cloverleaf open tuners, the new, an improved HiMass bridge, and pickups with Alnico5 magnets (another big step toward nailing the vintage tone). The quality of the fretwork, neck pocket, finish and nut slots is far above what you would expect on instruments in this price range.

### PERFORMANCE

**THE SINGLE-COIL** Precision Bass '50s has the contoured body of the 1953 Precision (rather than the slab body of the 1951 original model), the old-school Tele-style headstock and a Lake Placid Blue finish that is just plain sexy. The nut width is 1.65 inches and the maple fingerboard has a 9 1/2-

inch radius (as do the other models in this series), and the neck has the big, chunky feel fans of this model love. The tone is wide, open, round, and surprisingly bright, but with a simple turn of the tone knob, you're knee deep in chocolate goodness. Compared head-to-head with my Japanese-built Fender 1951 reissue, this bass more than holds its own, and at half the price.

The split-coil P-Bass is undoubtedly the most-copied bass on the planet, and for good reason—it set the ideal for what a bass should sound like: thick, defined, punchy and growling. The Classic Vibe '60s Precision nails that tone, with style. The Sonic Blue finish is sweet, and the excellent quality dark rosewood fingerboard and tinted neck give it the look and feel of a vintage piece. I put this one up against my own well-played 1988 Fender Precision, and frankly I was stunned at how close they were in tone and feel.

The Jazz bass has long been a favorite for its slimmer neck and dual-pickup design, and again, Squier totally cops the sound and feel of this stellar ax with its Classic Vibe Jazz Bass '60s. This bass gives up no clues to its price range. The combination of Olympic White finish and three-ply tortoise-shell pickguard is a favorite, and the dark rosewood board, narrow frets and modern "C" profile make for a pleasing fit in the hand. With both pickups up full, this bass has the complex tone of a great Jazz bass: a well-defined bottom, a natural mid scoop and tight top end. Soloing the neck pickup brings out the fatter, hollow tone of the Fifties single-coil P, and rolling off to the bridge pickup delivers classic burpy, Jaco tone. I stacked this baby up against my Custom Shop '64 Jazz, and despite the fact that my bass has flatwound strings (a significant factor that made this comparison



(from left) Precision '50s, Jazz '60s and Precision '60s



**SQUIER CLASSIC VIBE SERIES BASSES**

#### LIST PRICES:

\$499.00 (each)

#### MANUFACTURER:

Squier Guitars, [squierguitars.com](http://squierguitars.com)

#### BODY:

Basswood

#### NECK:

Maple, bolt-on

#### FINGERBOARD:

Precision '50s, maple; Jazz and Precision '60s, rosewood

#### FRETS:

20, vintage-style, narrow

#### SCALE LENGTH:

34 inches

#### PICKUPS:

Precision '50s, one single-coil;

Precision '60s, one

split-coil; Jazz '60s, two

single-coils; Alnico5 magnets

#### ELECTRONICS:

Passive

#### NUT WIDTHS:

Precisions, 1.65 inches;

Jazz, 1.50 inches

The HiMass bridge offers better sustain and excellent adjustability.

The Squiers have all the classic features of the real deal.

harder), the Squier did itself proud.

I know all this praise may seem hard to believe, but watch the video on this month's CD-ROM, in which I compare the Squiers to my personal axes, and then judge for yourself. As far as I'm concerned, with a few minor changes, these instruments would be indistinguishable from their more expensive counterparts.

### THE BOTTOM LINE

**FOR A BEGINNING PLAYER**, you can't do better for the money than Squier's Classic Vibe Series basses, and even a seasoned pro can appreciate the sound, look and feel of these economical axes. ★

	CON
GREAT LOOKS, FIT, AND FINISH; SERIOUS QUALITY TONE AT A BARGAIN PRICE	NONE

# GATE MAIL

*A reader asks how to work a noise gate, and Matt Bruck has an open-and-shut answer.*

**I have a Boss NS-2 Noise Suppressor. I use it onstage, and it works fine, but I don't understand what the threshold and decay controls actually do. Can you explain how a noise suppressor works so I can have a better idea of what happens when I set these controls?**

—Kliff Hollows  
Providence, RI



Boss NS-2: The gate keeper

A noise suppressor functions like a noise gate by preventing low-level electronic noises from pickups, pedals and other devices from passing through to the amplifier. Only signals loud enough to exceed the gate's threshold level are allowed through. Once the signal volume falls below the threshold, the gate closes again to shut out noise. Simple noise gates feature only a threshold level control, but more advanced models give the user control over several functions, including the rate at which the gate opens (attack), the length of time it remains open after the signal has passed (hold) and the rate at which it closes (decay). The NS-2 falls somewhere between these types, with controls for threshold and decay.

The threshold control lets you set the volume level at which the gate opens. At low threshold settings, the gate will open for quietly played notes but remain closed when only low-level noise is present. Medium threshold settings can help block out stronger unwanted signals, such as string noise produced by your fret hand. At higher threshold settings, only loud signals will open the gate. Obviously, the setting for this control will vary according to the type of music you play.

The decay control determines how quickly the gate closes. At low settings, decay is at a minimum, and the gate rapidly closes. Higher settings allow the gate to stay open longer so that sustained notes are not cut off prematurely or unnaturally. Again, set the control so that it works best for your style. If you play aggressive chugging metal, low decay settings might work best. If you play fluid bluesy riffs that

need to sustain, go with higher decay settings.

\* \* \* \* \*

**On the 12th fret of my Gibson Les Paul, one of the inlay dots has receded about an eighth of an inch into the fretboard. When strings get caught on the edge of the hole, they break. What should I do?**

—Jordan Drinkman  
Downing, WI

The holes for fretboard inlays are occasionally drilled deeper than necessary. When this happens, an inlay may eventually sink into the hole. While you could take your instrument to a repair shop and have a new dot installed,

I recommend tackling this one yourself, if you feel comfortable performing minor repairs.

You'll need a few items for this, including sandpaper or a file, a flat stick that can fit between the frets where the repair is being performed (a popsicle stick would work fine) and a new dot. You can purchase dots from online parts suppliers like AllParts.com or Stewart-MacDonald (stewmac.com). These are the same places that your local repair shop orders from. The cost for a dot is only about 50 cents.

Next, once you have the dot, prepare the area for the new inlay. Using an unsharpened pencil, push or tap the existing dot until it sits firmly on the bottom of the hole. Take the new dot

Krank Krankenstein: Leave the tubes alone, dude.


and sand or file the bottom of it until its thickness is slightly less than the depth of the hole. When installed, the dot should sit slightly lower than the fretboard. Don't sand away too much surface, or the new dot will sit too low and you'll end up with the same problem you're now trying to fix.

Once the new dot is the correct thickness, place a small drop of wood glue or Elmer's white glue in the hole and spread it around with a toothpick. (Avoid using any varieties of super glue; they cure too quickly, and the dot may come loose.) Set the new dot in the hole and place the flat stick you obtained for this repair on top of it. Press down on the stick until the dot is completely in the hole. (You might need to give it a tap with a small mallet.) Remove the stick and wipe up the excess glue with a damp cloth. Let the glue set for the amount of time recommended by the manufacturer before you play the guitar.

\* \* \* \* \*

**I recently purchased a Krank Krankenstein. It sounds pretty good, but it has too much edge and I want more resonance out of it. Would replacing the tubes do the trick?**

—Alex Titus  
Westmont, IL

Replacing the tubes might help, but I don't think it will give you the results you're looking for. I think a resonance control would be more to the point. Just as a presence control adjusts high-frequency emphasis, a resonance control adjusts low-frequency emphasis. Resonance controls are not common on amps, and the Krankenstein doesn't have one. I suggest that you experiment with a graphic or parametric equalizer placed in the amp's effect loop or in front of the input. 



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# A VULGAR DISPLAY OF POWER

THE GUITAR RIGS OF THE STARS

## FREE BIRD

*Hinder guitarist Joe "Blower" Garvey tells why it's important not to be tied down by your onstage rig.*

By NICK BOWCOTT


**>>DESIGN PHILOSOPHY** "When it comes to playing live, we believe it's all about putting on a show," says Hinder guitarist Joe "Blower" Garvey. "I've seen other guitarists use a lot of great effects, but that locks you to your station because you have to stand there while you switch three or four things at one time. I don't think that's very entertaining for the audience. I'd rather keep the switching and stuff to a minimum and just rock out. Plus, it's very handy having an experienced soundman like we do, as he's able to help us with sound effects out front. That allows us to have

effects like delay going on without us having to operate them onstage."

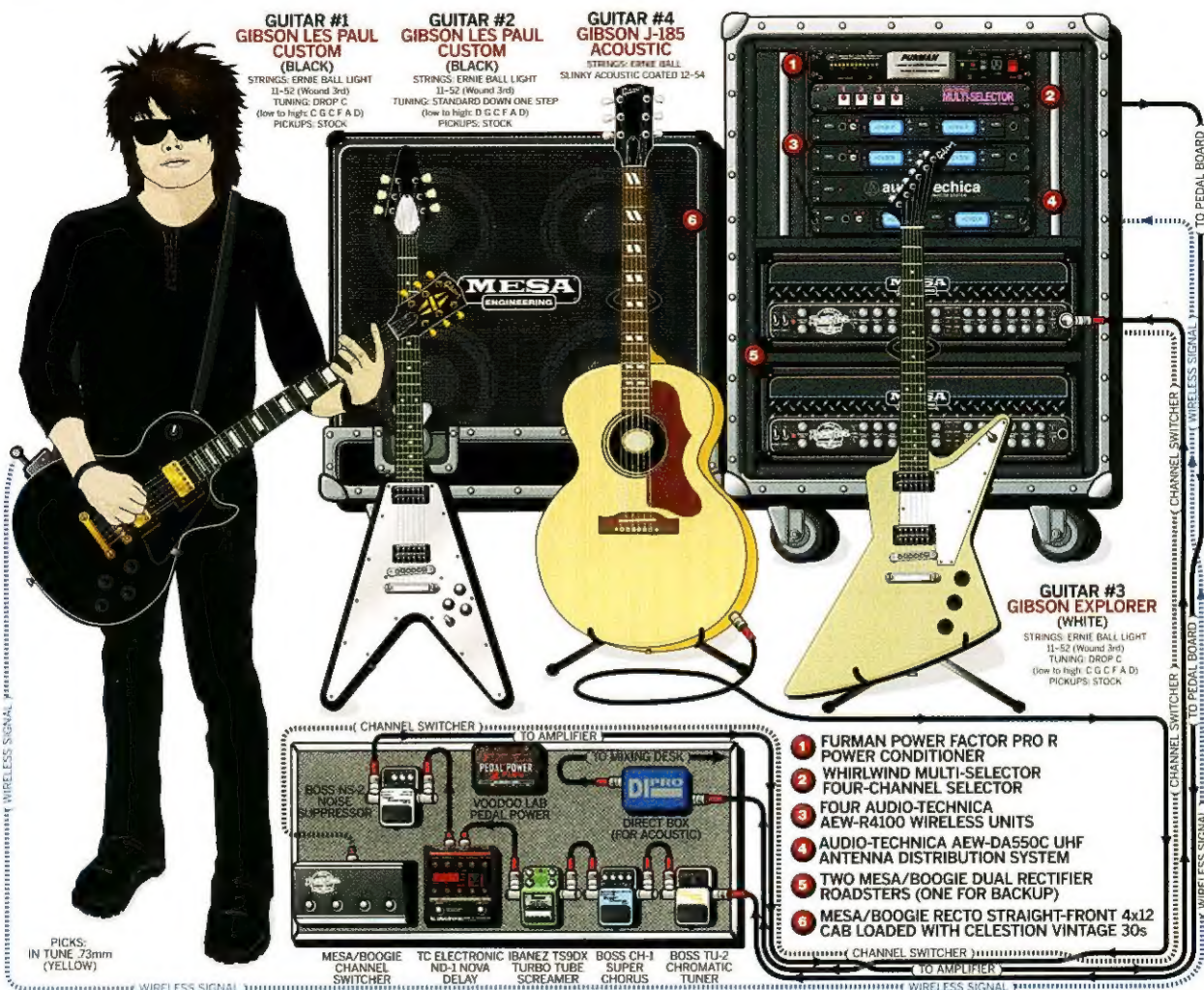
**>>CONTROL ISSUES** "As far as pedals go, I don't have that many on my board, but I do use all four channels on my Mesa head, which I have set for clean, semi-dirty, heavy and lead tones. Most of the switching I do is channel changing, but there are a few effects that I'll throw in from time to time. For example, I might hit the chorus pedal on a clean part or press the Tube Screamer during a solo to add a little more sustain. I'd say I switch an average of four or five times a song."

**>>FAVORITE PIECE OF GEAR** "I have three favorites. The first two are our in-ear

monitors and the wireless systems that we use, because both of them give us freedom and mobility when we perform. The third is my Mesa head, due to its sound, reliability and the company's awesome customer service."

**>>SECRET WEAPON** "It all comes down to the quality of my Gibsons. Amps and pedals are great, but tone and sustain all start from the guitar, and that's why I use what I believe to be the best of the best. My Gibson's give me all I need, from that classic rock feel to cutting-edge new stuff. I really think they're timeless."  Special thanks to Hinder's guitar tech, Keith "Moose" Douglass, for his invaluable assistance.

**I'D RATHER KEEP THE SWITCHING AND STUFF TO A MINIMUM AND JUST ROCK OUT."**





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